

ES. MONDAY, APRIL 3, 1995

Russian April Fool's jokes have sharp edge

Libya sets schedules for flights

TUNIS (R) — Libya has handed Saudi Arabia schedules of flights to take Muslim pilgrims to Jeddah in defiance of a U.N. embargo, Libya's news agency said on Monday. Jumaa Al Fazzani, Libyan minister for (pan-Arab) unity, has informed the Saudi charge d'affaires in Tripoli about the Libyan Arab Airlines flights schedules to Jeddah airport, JANA said. It said the government was demanding that Saudi Arabia facilitate the landing, taking off and servicing of Libyan airlines. Mr. Fazzani also informed the Egyptian and Sudanese ambassadors about the schedules for the Libyan flights which will fly to Saudi Arabia through Egyptian and Sudanese air space, JANA said. Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi announced last Tuesday that Libya would send thousands of pilgrims to Saudi Arabia during the next pilgrimage season, in defiance of U.N. sanctions slapped on Libya for its failure to hand over two suspects wanted in the west in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland. Analysts said Saudi Arabia was unlikely to defy U.N. resolutions and allow the planes to land.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية. الراي.

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Volume 19 Number 5884

AMMAN TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1995, THU ALQ'EDAH 4, 1415

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Lee ends private visit

AMMAN (Petra) — Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui and his wife Monday ended a two-day private visit to the Kingdom, during which Mr. Lee met with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent. During the visit, Mr. Lee also visited several scientific institutions and met with officials there. On Monday, Mr. Lee visited touristic and archaeological sites in the city of Madaba and the Jordan Valley.

Egypt open to 'serious' talks with Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Egypt hopes to begin serious talks with Israel on reducing nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, an adviser to visiting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said here Monday. Osama Al Baz, a political adviser to the Egyptian head of state, said that while the two countries have discussed nuclear arms and weapons of mass destruction, "We'd like these talks to be more organized, more formal, and official." Cairo hopes to "enter into serious negotiations with our Israeli neighbours to agree on a certain formula," he said before Mr. Mubarak was to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. But he added that bilateral talks alone would not prompt Egypt to sign an extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) when it comes up for renewal at the United Nations next month (see page 12).

Iraq plans to build one of biggest mosques

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq plans to start work this month on building one of the world's biggest mosques in Baghdad to mark the 58th birthday of President Saddam Hussein, the official press said Monday. The mosque, which will be constructed in the Middle of a lake fed by the waters of the Tigris, will be designed to hold 5,000 people with a further 70,000 on an esplanade surrounding the building. The newspapers, which did not specify the cost of the project, said work would start on two other mosques on the same day — April 28 — at Basra in the south and Mosul in the north.

Mass grave at Kabul university

KABUL (AP) — A mass grave containing 10 badly decomposed bodies was unearthed at the entrance to the medical faculty building of Kabul University, a military official said Monday. It was the second mass grave uncovered in recent days near the war-ravaged capital. The president's army found 22 bodies south of Kabul last week. All had been shot in the head. In the latest discovery, the 10 bodies were uncovered Sunday by a newly formed security commission established to try to put an end to the rampant lawlessness in Kabul. General Zaher Akbar said the bodies had been buried anywhere from one year to 18 months ago. It was not possible to identify the bodies or determine the cause of death due to the condition of the corpses.

Afghan veteran opens fire at Czech airport

PRAGUE (R) — An Afghan war veteran shot and injured a policeman at Prague airport and hijacked a taxi before being caught in a big manhunt, police in the Czech Republic said on Monday. Police arrested Ukrainian Oleg Zakharov, a former Soviet army officer, in the early hours of Sunday more than four hours after the shooting incident. Commander Antonin Fedorek, who led a hunt by about 100 police helped by a helicopter and dogs, told a news conference.

Hamas vows 'revenge' for Gaza explosion

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Shouting "revenge, revenge," more than 10,000 supporters of Hamas poured into the streets Monday after a deadly blast ripped apart an apartment in Gaza. Hamas leaders blamed Israel and Yasser Arafat's government for Sunday's explosion which killed eight people, including Kamal Kheil, a senior commander of Hamas' military wing. Hamas, the leading opponent to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) self-rule accord, threatened to retaliate with fresh attacks in Israel. "Thousands of people came today to tell Israel that the people have only one option, and that is the holy struggle until Palestine is liberated," Sheikh Ahmad Bahar of Hamas told the crowd during a memorial procession for those killed. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said it was likely Hamas would try to stage new attacks to recover from the setback of the weekend blast. "It cannot be ruled out that in order to give a boost to their prestige, they will attempt attacks," Rabin said. In Gaza City's Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood, site of the bomb factory, angry slogans were sprayed on walls Monday. "Our revenge will be cruel and bloody," read one. Rabin and the collaborators should not rejoice because Kheil has taught us how to make the Jews swim in their blood," read another.

(see page 2). Hundreds of mourners visited Kheil's home just a few metres from the site of the explosion. Kheil's brother, Jamal, bristled Monday at Palestinian police claims that Kheil died while preparing a bomb. "He wouldn't have done something that could kill women and children in a crowded area," said Jamal. But a Palestinian found a large weapons cache in the gutted bomb factory, including six unexploded bombs, 150 grenades, a 10-kilogrammes rocket, two pistols and an uzi submachine gun. Kheil, along with the other victims, was buried quietly Monday morning by Palestinian police who wanted to prevent a large Hamas protest against the Arafat government. But Hamas brought more than 10,000 supporters into the street Monday for a memorial procession for Kheil and the others. The marchers fell in line behind five empty wooden stretchers that are normally used to carry bodies to the cemetery. "Revenge, revenge," yelled some of the demonstrators. Others shouted, "We want to hear the Jews crying." Hamas has killed scores of Israelis in a series of suicide bombings in an attempt to sabotage the agreement. Both Israel and the Palesti-

Israel urging Hamas to join polls

PARIS (R) — Israel is quietly trying to persuade the Palestinian Islamic movement Hamas to take part in self-rule elections, the general secretary of the governing Israeli Labour Party, Nissim Zivli, said on Monday. He also said he did not believe Israel would reach a comprehensive peace agreement with Syria before the 1996 Israeli general election. Mr. Zivli spoke to reporters on a visit to France, against a background of Hamas accusations of Israeli responsibility, along with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), for an explosion that killed eight people, including two Hamas guerrillas, in the Gaza Strip (See separate story).

Mr. Zivli said he believed Israel would be prepared to evacuate some isolated Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, once Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat had taken steps to improve security and combat extremist violence.

He said the Israelis were holding unofficial contacts with political leaders of Hamas, which denounced the 1993 Israeli-PLO peace agreement and has continued to wage a campaign of violence against Israel, to encourage them to take part in forthcoming Palestinian elections.

"It is very important to enable Hamas' participation in these elections," he said. "Everyone understands that if Hamas is to be moderated somewhat, it must be drawn into the process."

Mr. Zivli said the political leaders of Hamas were not always responsible for or in agreement with the actions of the movement's military wing, the Izzeddin Al Qassem brigades.

"If the political leaders of Hamas think they can gain from the (electoral) process, this will be an incentive to isolate the armed branch," he said.

"That is why we are trying to persuade the Palestinians that the participation of Hamas is important," he said.

Mr. Zivli declined to give details of Israeli contacts with Hamas, or to say whether they involved the movement's imprisoned founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin.

But he said: "There are contacts. Not official. We have always had contacts with Hamas people."

Israel initially said no organisation which opposed the Oslo Israeli-PLO accords should be permitted to take part in the self-rule elections.

But Mr. Zivli said it would be sufficient for Hamas to omit from its political platform the aim of the destruction of Israel and support for armed struggle. He drew a distinction between Hamas and the more radical Islamic Jihad movement.

The Labour official said Mr. Arafat, who sought an agreement with Hamas leaders but foundered on their refusal to restrain the movement's armed branch, was now telling Israeli leaders he believed Hamas would contest the Palestinian elections.

On Syria, Mr. Zivli said must realise there are security risks that not even a labour government was prepared to take for peace.



Palestinian policemen pick up remains of victims from the explosion in a three-storey building in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood of Gaza City Sunday (AFP photo)

Aziz urges U.N. to improve oil offer

BAGHDAD (AP) — Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz on Monday urged the U.N. Security Council to improve an offer to allow Iraq to sell oil worth \$4 billion, but reiterated that Baghdad rejects the proposal as it stands now.

If "substantive, positive amendments" were introduced into the U.S.-proposed draft resolution on the sale offer, Iraq would take another look at it, he said before leaving for New York to lobby Security Council members.

He did not specify what those amendments should be. The official Iraqi News Agency quoted Mr. Aziz as saying: "We have rejected the U.S. draft and will continue to reject it. There is no change in this stand."

Iraq's 250-member parliament unanimously rejected the U.N. proposal Saturday.

The proposal seeks to modify U.N. sanctions, imposed in August 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait, to allow Baghdad to sell oil worth \$4 billion to buy food and medicine for Iraq's 18 million people who are suf-

fering worsening hardship because of the embargo.

Under the proposal, Baghdad could spend half the proceeds from the oil sales. But 30 per cent would go to Kuwait as war reparations and 20 per cent to the United Nations to pay for its operations in Iraq.

The proposal widens an earlier U.N. offer to Iraq for a one-time sale of oil worth \$1.6 billion. Baghdad rejected that, claiming U.N. conditions infringed on Iraq's sovereignty.

Mr. Aziz said Monday that there have already been two U.N. resolutions on the issue, resolutions 706 and 712, but he said they were "distorted."

"They have colonialist objectives, seeking to control Iraq's oil wealth, divide Iraq and dominate its destiny. Therefore, we have firmly rejected these two resolutions and the latest U.S. draft resolution, which does not differ from the two above-mentioned resolutions," he said.

If favourable amendments were made as Baghdad requests, Mr. Aziz stressed:



Tareq Aziz

"We'd look at the new draft and decide what position to adopt in light of the basic constants in our position. These constants state that any arrangement of this kind must not obstruct or delay the full implementation of paragraph 22 (of Resolution 687) and must not include any interfering conditions that harm Iraq's sovereignty and national unity or constitute future shackles," he said.

Under Resolution 687, which ended the 1991 Gulf

war, Iraqi exports would be permitted once the U.N. special commission charged with destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction testifies that Baghdad has met all the Security Council's demands.

Meanwhile, an Iraqi lawyer met twice Monday with two American prisoners in the maximum security Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad to prepare an appeal against their eight-year sentences, the lawyer's office said.

Khaled Jarjees discussed the legal procedures with David Daliberti, 41, and William Barloon, 39, an associate at Mr. Jarjees's office said by telephone, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Jarjees first visited the men in the morning, then returned to the prison for further consultations five hours later after meeting Iraqi officials.

The details of his discussions with the Americans was not divulged.

Mr. Jarjees has represented all Westerners arrested for illegally entering Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war.

(Continued on page 7)

Turkey rejects calls to quit Iraq

BONN (Agencies) — Turkish Foreign Minister Erdal Inonu, launching a diplomatic offensive to defend Turkey's military drive against Kurdish separatist bases in northern Iraq, Monday rebuffed a new German demand to end the operation.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said after the talks with his Turkish counterpart that "the Turkish army must withdraw rapidly, tomorrow if possible."

A Turkish commander meanwhile acknowledged that Kurdish rebels were still able to stage attacks on his units in northern Iraq two weeks after Turkey sent tens of thousands of troops across the border.

General Hasan Kündakci, the commander of the northern Iraqi operation, said some 100 Kurdish rebels attacked a Turkish military unit in Haftanin region Friday night and fought for four hours, the Istanbul daily Sabah reported Monday.

The attack could be a sign that the Turkish cross-border operation, which has been heavily criticised in the West, was not as effective as hoped for by the Turkish government and military.

The rebels killed five soldiers in another surprise



A Turkey army convoy in northern Iraq on Sunday (AFP photo)

attack on an army unit in Darkarjan village last Wednesday.

On March 20, some 35,000 Turkish soldiers poured across Turkey's southeastern border to penetrate some 45 kilometres inside northern Iraq to wipe out the rebel camps.

The fighting involves the section of northern Iraq controlled by Iraqi Kurds who want independence from Baghdad. Patrolled by allied warplanes since the end of the Gulf war, the area is beyond the reach of Iraq's military.

The guerrillas belong to the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), fighting for autonomy in southeastern Turkey since 1984.

Some 2,800 PKK rebels were believed to be based in more than 20 camps used for

hit and run attacks.

Germany has been the harshest critic of the military incursion into Iraq and last week suspended weapons deliveries to Turkey, also putting on hold a \$107-million financial aid package for the construction in Germany of two frigates for the Turkish navy.

The drive — which Turkey said on Sunday had so far killed 25 Kurds and 26 Turkish soldiers — has been criticised by other European governments as well as Germany, notably by France.

However, speaking Monday, Mr. Inonu defended the offensive.

"Our soldiers will pull out" only when Ankara considers that PKK guerrillas are no longer in a position to carry out attacks in Turkey from bases in northern Iraq, Mr.

Inonu said.

"PKK terrorism justifies our action in northern Iraq," he told a press conference after meeting Mr. Kinkel.

Mr. Inonu flatly denied reports that Turkey was seeking to establish a permanent security zone in northern Iraq, as Israel has done north of its border in southern Lebanon to keep out hostile infiltrators.

In an interview with the Turkish daily Sabah on Monday, General Kündakci said the Turkish army has a plan to pull its troops out of northern Iraq.

"Our plan aimed at a troop pullout and preventing the terrorists (Kurdish rebels) from infiltrating into Turkish territory is ready," Gen. Kündakci told the paper.

(Continued on page 3)



Palestinian police examine the apartment of a three-storey building in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood of Gaza City where a huge explosion occurred Sunday (AFP photo)

Deadly explosion shocks Gazans

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Gaza residents spoke of their horror Sunday when a massive explosion ripped through an apartment block in the city centre, killing six people and injuring about 12 others.

Hatem Abu Kaied said he rushed to the scene immediately after the blast.

Still shaken, he said he heard "a colossal noise which terrified everybody."

There were "blown-up bodies and corpses, including a baby. It was terrible."

Palestinian police deployed in strength at the site to contain the thousands of Gaza residents who went to see the remains of the three-storey building shattered by the blast.

"I saw heads and organs

flung through the air by the blast," said Jamal Al Assali, 25, a resident of the Sheikh Radwan district rocked by the explosion.

"But I didn't start shaking because after seven years of the intifada we are used to such scenes in Gaza."

"It is clear to all the neighbours living near the apartment block that the Hamas militants were making horrific devices."

Palestinian police chief Ghazi Jabali said three members of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas died "when a big bomb they were handling exploded."

A very young child was among the six victims, he said.

Mahmoud Zahar, a Hamas official in Gaza, said the explosion was "an attack care-

fully planned by Israel."

Another Sheikh Radwan resident, Salem Shamaheh, said he was terrified by the explosion and "didn't know what to do."

"I remained frozen, watching the police evacuate the victims."

Palestinian police said the dead included Kamal Kheil, a leader of Izzedin Al Qassam, armed wing of the hardline Hamas, which is violently opposed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israeli autonomy accords.

Me. Kheil's relatives were still hoping he had survived the blast. "We still don't know about his fate, but we praise God for everything, even if he has died," said his brother Samir, 27.

Israeli security services

have been hunting for Kheil for three years, accusing him of killing an Israeli officer in 1993 and several Palestinian collaborators.

The Palestinian Authority also wanted to capture him for the killing of three Palestinians since self-rule was launched last May.

General Jabali said police found 25 kilograms of a toxic powder and small rockets in the ruins of the partially collapsed building.

They also found automatic weapons and bullet-proof vests and remains of 12 detonators and five explosive devices which they dismantled.

Hamas has claimed several major anti-Israeli attacks in the past year, including a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv which killed 22 people on Oct. 19.

In Damascus, Hamas confirmed Kheil had died in the bomb blast and vowed revenge.

Abu Mohammad Mustafa, Hamas representative in Damascus, said the Palestinian police of PLO chief Yasser Arafat and Israeli forces were responsible for the incident and that Hamas would avenge it.

"Brother Kamal Kheil and three other fighters of Izzedin Al Qassam were killed today in the Gaza building where they were hiding," Mr. Mustafa told Reuters.

"The Arafat authority and the Zionists are responsible for the killing... the Qassam Brigades will respond quickly and painfully to the criminal bombing of the building," he said.

Mr. Mustafa said Mr. Kheil had been hunted by Israeli security forces and Palestinian police for a long time and that he and his colleagues went to the apartment to hide on Saturday evening.

"Agents of Arafat and the Israeli secret service knew where the fighters were hiding and bombed the building to claim that bombs exploded while the fighters were preparing them," he said.

Mr. Mustafa said Hamas had never prepared bombs in populated areas in the past and that the weapons discovered at the building were personal weapons of the Hamas fighters.

Algeria claims success in fighting militants

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammed Salah Dembri claimed Sunday that the Algerian army and security forces were winning their battle against the country's Islamic fundamentalist insurgency, the official Algerian press service APS reported Sunday.

"The terrorists have lost ground" after recent army offensives, Mr. Dembri told the Egyptian magazine October, adding that "the security situation is improving every day" and saying that presidential elections will be held later this year as planned, APS reported.

Army units launched a massive offensive against the armed Islamic groups two weeks ago and Algerian newspapers have put the death toll among fundamentalists at 2,800. There has been no official toll and no toll for those killed among the security forces.

The fighting in Algeria began in 1992 after the army-backed government cancelled the second round of elections the since-banned fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) looked like winning.

So far, it is thought to have cost 30,000 lives, according to U.S. State Department figures.

Speaking to the Egyptian magazine, Mr. Dembri said a presidential election will be held "in the last third of the year," with the first task of a new president being "the constitution of a new government to arrange parliamentary elections, then local elections, which will guarantee Algeria elected institutions for the next two years."

Signalling no let-up in the regime's opposition to talks with the FIS, as urged by eight opposition parties earlier this year, Mr. Dembri said:

"The country rejects talks with the banned FIS because of the conditions it imposes. However, dialogue remains open to all parties in Algeria in order to prepare for elections."

In the first of those talks, Algerian President Liamine Zeraoui met Sunday with Abdul Hamid Mehri, the secretary-general of Algeria's formerly sole ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN).

Both the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and the Islamic Renaissance Movement (Al Nahda), are to be received in the next few days. The Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA), has not yet responded to invitations Mr. Zeraoui issued at the end of March to 11 parties and four organisations and union bodies.

The FFS national executive, which has boycotted talks between the government and opposition parties since Dec. 1993, said it would also join the April 8 talks "with the intention of setting in motion a peace dynamic to give hope to the population."

In all, eight opposition parties in January signed a national contract at a meeting in Rome which the government denounced and boycotted.

Meanwhile Anouar Haddad, head of the FIS parliamentary delegation abroad, said "the jihad" will continue until an Islamic state is founded, "if Algerian authorities did not accept the Rome contract, to which the FIS was a signatory."

Mr. Haddad, speaking at a conference of Islamic fundamentalists in the Sudanese capital Khartoum, accused France of helping the Algerian army "politically and militarily."

UNESCO team shocked on visit to project near pyramids

CAIRO (AFP) — A team of UNESCO experts expressed shock on a visit to a controversial motorway project threatening the Giza pyramids near Cairo Sunday.

"I didn't think it would be this terrible," French Egyptologist Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt told AFP.

"I didn't think it was so large," said Laurent Levi-Strauss, a French member of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, as he photographed the nearly completed road just 2.5 kilometres south of the pyramids.

Work on the motorway, badly needed to divert traffic out of the clogged Cairo city centre, is two-thirds complete. But tombs and artifacts have been discovered just a few metres (yards) from the building site.

"We have to get rid of this road," said Abdul Halim Nureddin, head of the Egyptian antiquities department, who accompanied the team.

The six-member team also included Sorbonne University Vice President Leon Pressouyre, German landscape architect Hans Werkmeister and two Egyptians — Salah Lamai, a specialist in Islamic heritage, and Hamed Mubarak, a town planner.

Work on the new ring road encircling Cairo was suspended in November after the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) protested that it would cross part of the pyramids site.

The team drove along 5.5 kilometres of the road, parts

of it built up on embankments six metres (20 feet) high. They stopped several times to examine the effects of the construction on the landscape.

They also visited tombs discovered nearby.

The team also examined other nearby construction sites including a police accommodation project and an army camp surrounded by high walls.

Before the visits, the team met Sunday with Mr. Nureddin, Culture Minister Farouq Hosni and Minister of State for New Communities Mohammad Ibrahim Suleiman.

Mr. Suleiman, quoted by the official Egyptian news agency MENA, said a joint committee of experts from all concerned ministries would try to find solutions to protect the ancient sites but also to reap the benefits of the ring road.

Before ending its mission Thursday, the UNESCO team will hold talks with officials from several ministries, the antiquities department, the Giza authorities, army representatives and officials from the institute for urban planning in the Paris region, which helped design the ring road.

A new route for the highway proposed by the government in December was immediately rejected by UNESCO as it would involve building a tunnel or moving the road two to four kilometres (about two miles) south of the existing route, which would still take it across the pyramids site.

NEWSIN BRIEF

Saleh meets Yemen-Saudi joint panel

SANAA (R) — Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Monday met a joint Saudi-Yemeni military committee which is holding a second round of talks on a long-standing border dispute. The official SABA news agency quoted Mr. Saleh as telling the committee that Yemen was "keen to preserve brotherly and cooperation relations between our two countries... and keen... (to preserve) the security and peace in the region."

The committee, set up under a memorandum Yemen and Saudi Arabia signed in February, is trying to resolve a 60-year-old border dispute. The memorandum provides for committees to demarcate land and sea borders and prevent troop movements in the potentially oil-rich border area.

U.N. confirms 350 deaths in Afghan landslide

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — U.N. officials confirmed Monday that 350 people were killed in two landslides in northeastern Afghanistan last week. A U.N. mission which went to the sites in Badkshan province said 313 people died when a massive slide buried 106 houses in the village of Qalqi Ziri Kotal in Daraim district on March 27, a statement from the world body said. A second landslide in the same district claimed 37 lives. The report said 442 people survived and so far 12 bodies had been recovered. The mission delivered emergency medical supplies provided by the World Health Organisation on Sunday. It has now returned to the provincial capital, Faizabad.

Reporters held by PKK may be freed soon

ANKARA (AFP) — An AFP reporter taken hostage last Friday by Kurdish rebels along with a photographer for the Reuters news agency may be released soon, a rebel spokesman was quoted as saying Monday by the daily Milliyet newspaper. Ali Garzan, the European spokesman for the ERNK, the political arm of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), said he thinks the two journalists "may be released soon," but he did not give a specific date. He added that Kadri Gursel of AFP and Fatih Saribas of Reuters "are in good health and they are our guests." The pair, both Turkish nationals, were abducted by the rebels last Friday after spending several days in northern Iraq covering Ankara's two-week old offensive against rebel bases in northern Iraq. Mr. Garzan said they were seized for their own security in case of an attack by the Turkish army.

Vietnam, Bahrain to exchange ambassadors

HANOI (AP) — Vietnam and Bahrain will exchange ambassadors for the first time, an official report said Monday. The two countries agreed to set up embassies in each other's capitals last Friday, the state-run Vietnam News reported. Vietnam has sought to build stronger ties with non-communist countries since the collapse of the former Soviet Union. Vietnamese leaders are especially eager to make friends with countries such as Bahrain that have the money or technology Vietnam needs to help develop its backward economy. Crude oil is Vietnam's most valuable export, and Bahrain relies on sales of refined petroleum products for most of its foreign exchange earnings.

Sudan rebel group announces ceasefire

NAIROBI (AFP) — A splinter faction of southern Sudanese rebels announced a ceasefire Monday to match two-month truces declared by the government and the main rebel movement after mediation by U.S. former President Jimmy Carter. David de Chan, spokesman for the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), said the two-month ceasefire was to take effect from midnight (2100 GMT) on Monday. Mr. De Chan said SSIM forces had repulsed a government attack on the town of Malwut in Upper Nile province which he said had been mounted despite the government ceasefire declared on March 27. "The SSIM forces have been ordered to maintain the state of maximum alert and to fight back only in legitimate self-defence," Mr. De Chan said. The mainstream Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by John Garang announced last week that his group would also observe the two-month ceasefire.

Libya mediates in Sudan-Uganda row

TUNIS (R) — Senior officials from Sudan and Uganda are meeting in Tripoli hoping that Libyan mediation will help them end a row between the two neighbouring countries, the official Libyan news agency JANA said on Monday. Colonel Abu Bakr Jaber Younes, one of Muammar Qadhafi's aides, on Sunday night met separately with Sudan's first Vice-President Ali Zubeir Mohammad Saleh and Uganda's Vice-Prime Minister Eriya Kategaya, JANA said. The meetings were held ahead of a Libya-Sudan-Uganda meeting "in the framework of Libya's efforts to solve the African problems with the mediation of Africans themselves far from foreign interferences," the agency added. The meeting is called by Libya "to discuss the amelioration of the relations between the two countries (Sudan and Uganda) and establish a dialogue between them with the aim of boosting these relations," it said.

Israeli construction chief found dead at home

MITZE RAMON (AFP) — Police on Monday found an Israeli construction company boss dead at his home in the southern region of Nagb and said he apparently died of natural causes. They had earlier feared the 60-year-old man could have been murdered by one of his Palestinian workers after he was found with blood on his face. But a medical report showed he died of an internal haemorrhage after a long illness. The construction chief mostly employed Palestinians and at times lodged them for the night in Mitze Ramon.

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PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Le Prince Et La Sirène
17:30 Pyramide
18:00 Tour Du Monde Tour Du Ciel
19:00 News in French
19:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
19:45 Fast Pas Rever
20:30 Home Improvement
21:10 The Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:30 Seaforth

PRAYER TIMES

04:58 Fajr
06:17 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:39 Dhuhr
16:12 'Asr
19:01 Maghreb
20:19 'Isha

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WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to
rise slightly with scattered showers
expected in the different parts of
the Kingdom and winds becoming
northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba,
skies will be partly cloudy, winds
northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.
Amman 3/13
Aqaba 10/21
Deserts 3/ 16
Jordan Valley 9/ 19

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 10, Aqaba 19. Humidity
readings: Amman 74 per cent.
Aqaba 31 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 682935
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Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672
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Ferdows pharmacy 778336
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Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimoon pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 633672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Akram Momani 248795
Alqods pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Murid Damra 985532
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 751111
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 603800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann. 644281/6
Akhil Maternity, J. Ann. 644412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642502
Madras, J. Amman 626140
Palestine, Shamsi 66471/4
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushter Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 6612737
Al-Abli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marka 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 674153

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa Maternity Hospital 644281/6
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)900560
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)90990
IRBID:
Princess Beama Hospital (02)7355
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)7275
Ibn Al Nafesa Hospital (02)747108
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by
Royal Jordanian (RJ) information
department at the Queen Alia In-
ternational Airport Tel. (08)53200-
5, where it should always be ver-
ified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ)
Flights
(Terminal 1)
07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
08:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:00 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:35 Vienna, Madrid (RJ)
12:00 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
12:00 Paris, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:40 London (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
20:05 Larnaca (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:25 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:10 Aden (DY)
23:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
23:00 Hat Yai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
03:20 Vienna (OS)
13:20 Rome (AZ)
14:45 Munich (YF)
20:00 Aden (DY)
20:20 Beirut (ME)
23:20 Amsterdam (KL)
23:55 Bucharest (RO)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
03:20 Vienna (OS)
13:20 Rome (AZ)
14:45 Munich (YF)
20:00 Aden (DY)
20:20 Beirut (ME)
23:20 Amsterdam (KL)
23:55 Bucharest (RO)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus
5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus
7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman
5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/50
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 100/60
Carrot 180/100
Cauliflower 240/120
Cucumbers (large) 130/70
Cucumbers (small) 220/170
Eggplant 200/160
Garlic 120/80
Green beans 240/180
Lemon 420/250
Marrow (large) 100/60
Marrow (small) 200/100
Onion (green) 240/150
Onion (dry) 250/150
Orange 300/400
Peas 550/400
Pepper (hot) 480/240
Pepper (sweet) 320/200
Potato 180/100
String Beans 350/220
Tomato 320/180

Jordanian, Israeli tourism ministers to sign agreement today in Deir Alla

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The ministers of tourism of Jordan and Israel, Abdul Ilah Khatib and Uri Baram, are scheduled to sign an agreement on tourism on Tuesday in Deir Alla.

The agreement was initiated by Ministry of Tourism Under-Secretary Ghasan Mifteh and his Israeli counterpart during a ceremony in the northern Baqoura area on Feb. 10, the same day Israel completed its withdrawal from Jordanian territories as called for in the Oct. 26 peace treaty.

The agreement calls for close cooperation between Jordan and Israel in tourism-related affairs in terms of procedures and facilities as well as joint marketing of tour packages to both countries.

An agreement between Royal Jordanian and El Al to allow American tourists to fly either to Jordan or Israel and leave from the other after spending a specified period of time complements the tourism accord.

The peace treaty calls for more than 24 accords, some of which have already been signed.

Hani Mulki, head of the

Jordanian side to a joint committee with Israel charged with following up the implementation of the treaty, said last month that the negotiations were proceeding well and expressed confidence that the accords would be signed as scheduled.

The treaty calls for three types of accords; the first to be signed in three months after the ratification of the treaty — which took place on Dec. 10 — the second in six months, and the third in nine months.

Those in the three-month group, including the tourism accord, another on borders and security and yet another on crossings be-

tween the two countries, were signed on Feb. 10.

The deadline for the six-month group is May 10, and for the nine-month group is Aug. 10.

Among the key accords expected to be signed by May 10 are agreements on trade and transport.

Meanwhile, Israeli ambassador-designate to Jordan Shimon Shamir is due to arrive here on Thursday to assume office and is expected to formally present his credentials around April 10, officials sources said Monday.

Jordan's ambassador-designate to Israel, Marwan Muasher, who was in Washington last week to

attend part of His Majesty King Hussein's talks with U.S. administration officials, was also expected in Tel Aviv around the same time Mr. Shamir arrives here, according to the sources.

An Israeli spokesman said the Israeli embassy, which is operating out of the Frode Grand Hotel in Amman, has not been able to locate suitable premises to set up a permanent presence in Jordan.

The Jordanian embassy is located in the Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv. It was not immediately known whether the mission had found suitable premises to move into.

Princess Basma urges women students to follow lead of Jordan's role models

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma urged Jordanian women to take a more active role in the workplace, pointing to women leaders in the country and their positive contributions in all fields and at all levels.

In an opening speech at the first women students encounter organized by the Students Committee of the Yarmouk University Students Union and attended by students of the university of Jordan, Princess Basma cited numerous examples of women leaders in the country and hoped they would be an incentive to women students to follow in their steps.

"I feel so proud and happy of the positive outcome that women achieved through their participation in municipal committees. This is a considerable and important contribution to women's role in political life," she said.

Princess Basma pointed to several examples of women leaders in the country espe-

cially in Parliament and in the government. She said women's achievements and their assumption of decision-making posts should be an incentive to other women to follow suit.

She also stressed the need to highlight the youngsters' needs and opinions since they are considered a basic pillar of the progress and development of any country.

A special forum for Arab youth was held in October last year aimed at getting acquainted with the youngsters' opinions in the report prepared for the coming World Conference on Women in Beijing this September.

Marwan Kamal, President of Yarmouk University, said there was a special interest in raising students' awareness of women's participation in the society.

He said a special club would be established for this purpose where women students would take part in

several activities within and outside the university campus.

Amal Freij, president of the women's committee at the university's students union, delivered a speech on the occasion, in which she expressed hope that the meeting's objectives would be achieved. She also called coordinating efforts among students to achieve their aspirations.

Several seminars will be held at the two-day encounter that will tackle several issues: women's role in changing the current situation, unions and their role in the society, and women's participation in the workplace.

Other working papers on women students' contributions and coordinating efforts among students will also be presented.

Several women leaders and activists are taking part in this event, notably Deputy of Parliament Toujan Faisal.

Democratising educational process requires no political administrative decision — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh stressed the importance of democratising the educational process in the country, but said there would not be any political or administrative decision to do so.

In a meeting with educationists from Amman suburbs held at the Marj Al Hamam Secondary School for Boys, Mr. Rawabdeh said that education should be democratised, but that an administrative or political decision would be unnecessary since democracy is a way of conduct that children should learn at school, at home and in the street.

He said the individual can learn democracy through practice and not through textbooks. He said the teacher, the parents and the students, should be able to elect their representatives, and practise democracy for it to prosper.

While political affiliations are a basic right of Jordanian, Mr. Rawabdeh said, schools should not be considered a place for political activities.

"We want the teacher to be a teacher for Jordan and not for a party, a sect or a group," he said.

Mr. Rawabdeh also tackled the issue of pensioned



Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Monday presides over a

meeting of educationists from the Amman suburbs (Petra photo)

educationists and said the process of pensioning employees would continue, but this should not be considered

a punishment. He also said that projects for vertical expansion of schools were under way, and

all school textbooks for all stages will be finalised next year.

The Educational Depart-

ment for Amman suburbs comprises 176 governmental schools and includes 2,500 teachers and 40,000 students.

Abequa pleads not guilty to murder, kidnapping

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Mohammad Ismail Abequa, a Jordanian-American accused of premeditated murder of his 40-year-old wife in the United States and kidnapping his two children, Monday pleaded not guilty to both charges.

Mr. Abequa, 46, who earlier confessed to strangling his wife, Nihal, on July 4, in her Parsippany Troy Hills, New Jersey home in a dispute over the custody of their two children Lisa, 6, and Sami, 3, told a three-judge panel and a full courtroom of journalists and family members that he was innocent of all charges.

In his confession to the Jordanian authorities, Mr. Abequa, a naturalised U.S. citizen, said he fled the United States with the children after committing the crime and stayed at his mother's home in Sweileh before being arrested on July 20. The children were later

thrown out of the Kingdom with their maternal aunt, Nesima Dokur, who had arrived in Jordan from the U.S. to claim the children after His Majesty King Hussein intervened in the case in August.

If Mr. Abequa is convicted he could face the death penalty. But Jordan has commuted most death sentences in recent years.

The opening session of one of the most controversial trials to take place in Jordan lasted only 20 minutes.

Abdul Rahman Tawfiq, the presiding judge read out Mr. Abequa's indictment in the murder of his wife and the kidnapping of his children.

Mr. Abequa's defence attorney Masoud Khalifeh contested the validity of evidence collected by the prosecutor general in the U.S. in a Jordanian court of law.

State Prosecutor Khalid Darwish, who urged the court for the maximum

penalty, travelled to the United States in March and gathered evidence with the help of New Jersey prosecutors to be used against Mr. Abequa in his trial.

"There is no article in the Jordanian law that stipulates that a prosecutor can travel outside the Kingdom and conduct an investigation. The law says investigations must be conducted in Jordan," Mr. Khalifeh told the Jordan Times following the end of the first session.

Jordan had turned down an U.S. request to hand over Mr. Abequa to be tried in the United States because an extradition treaty did not exist between the two countries.

Although an extradition treaty was signed last week between the two countries, Jordanian officials said that Mr. Abequa will be tried in Jordan.

The court said that the next session will be held on Thursday, and the prosecution will respond to the defence's argument.

Police investigate fatal shooting of 88-year-old man

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Tafilah police are investigating the death of an 88-year-old man who was found shot Sunday in the Qutefat suburb, police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports said.

Suleiman Mohammad died a few minutes after being shot in the head, officials said.

One source told the Jordan Times that the victim committed suicide because "he was mentally ill."

"In addition to being mentally ill, Suleiman (the victim) was living alone, and he was sick of life and decided to kill himself," the source said.

Another source said that

the victim, who was well-off and lived with his family, might have killed himself because he had cancer.

Police refused to confirm any of the allegations and said they were investigating the incident.

In the meantime, police in Amman apprehended suspects in two separate murder cases that occurred last week, officials said.

"At this time we cannot comment on any of the cases until our investigations are over," an official told the Jordan Times.

One of the cases involved a 29-year-old man who was shot and killed on the Yajouz Highway on March 29.

According to police, the victim, Mohammad Ghanem, who was studying

at the University of Applied Sciences, was sitting talking with his fiancée near the University of Jordan when he was approached by three people.

Police said that the three suspects started harassing the victim and his fiancée, then forced the into the victim's car.

The suspects forced the victim to drive until one of them told him to exit off the main street, the authorities said. When the victim refused, one of the suspects drew a gun and shot Mr. Ghanem twice in the head, the police said. Then all three suspects fled the scene.

"All we can say at this time is that we have

apprehended some suspects and we are questioning them," the official said, adding that an article published Monday in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i regarding the murder was inaccurate.

"We regret what Al Ra'i published about the murder because the information was not correct," the official told the Jordan Times Monday.

Moreover, the official said that police were questioning two suspects in connection with the double murder of a 28-year-old woman and her six-month-old child in Al Shamsani area on March 18.

According to police, the woman, identified only as M.M.H., and her son, S.M.F., were discovered in

an apartment on March 22 stabbed to death.

Preliminary investigations by police indicated that the woman, who was married to a man in Irbid, had run away from her home in 1992, and was reported missing by her husband.

According to the authorities, further investigations indicated that the woman had had an affair with a man who investigations revealed had rented her the apartment where her body and that of her child were found.

According to the official, the authorities will reveal the details of both cases "when the investigations are over."

Turkey rejects calls to quit Iraq

Speaking in Bonn, Mr. Inal said he had asked Mr. Onu to consider political solution to the Kurdish question based on cultural autonomy for the large Kurdish minority while preserving Turkey's territorial integrity.

Turkish troops are using tactics similar to those used in the United Nations in northern Iraq and leaving N. guards at risk of attack by Kurdish rebels, a U.N. official charged.

"The Turkish army uses its vehicles with black let-painted on both sides, similar to ours," a senior official of the U.N. guards in Dohuk near the Turkish border.

his could provoke PKK into attacking U.N. officials, the official said.

"U.N. guards who questioned the Turkish army about its vehicles were told that they only used them in military areas for camouflage. But we found them in military areas east of Zakho where there isn't any snow," official added.

Tripartite panel to meet on Aqaba gulf projects

By Caroline Faraj
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first meeting of the tripartite Jordanian-American-Israeli joint committee on marine sciences will be held today in Aqaba.

Director General of the Jordanian Ports Corporation Dureid Mahasneh, who will head the Jordanian side at the meeting, said the committee will discuss over the three days environmental projects to be carried out in the Gulf of Aqaba and the use of modern technology in developing the area economically.

Dr. Mahasneh said the scientific committee will also study the prospect of starting fish farm projects in the port area, protecting the environment and managing coastal resources.

The meeting, which is organised in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is part of the Arab-Israeli multilateral talks in terms of scientific efforts to prepare feasibility

studies for environmental projects, said Dr. Mahasneh.

He noted that many project offers are being proposed to protect the environment, particularly in the Aqaba gulf.

He said there is a programme which was launched to conduct the needed studies for combating oil pollution in the Aqaba gulf through financial support by Japan amounting to \$8 million, noting that the Gulf area was receiving international attention because it is shared by four countries: Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Dr. Mahasneh said in view of offers received and studies being conducted at the bilateral and multilateral levels, it seems that the Aqaba gulf will be a touristic and business attraction area, particularly if a free zone in the city of Aqaba were established.

He continued that this will have a great impact on boosting activities in the port area and will serve the development process in the Jordan Rift Valley.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

SECOND ARAB DRAMA FESTIVAL
★ Two plays entitled "The Theatre of Sivastopie" and "How We Walk" respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

- NEWS**
- ★ ABC News Highlights and McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
- ★ Exhibition of Egyptian products at Amman International Exhibition, Marj Al Hamam (Tel. 688141).
 - ★ Exhibition of copper sculptures by Iraqi artist Mohammad Hussein Jundi at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
 - ★ Exhibition of graphic works by Rafiq Lahham at Darat Al Fanun. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists.
 - ★ Exhibition of art by Leo Rialp at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
 - ★ Exhibition of prize-winning paintings by Czech students at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition entitled "Dialogue Between the Nature and the Artist" by landscape painter Ahmad Mounib.
 - ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Balqa' Art Gallery, Fuhels.
 - ★ Exhibition of art by Rula Shunkairy at the French Cultural Centre.

Businessmen call for effective French role at economic summit

PARIS (Petra) — Jordanian businessmen Monday called for an effective French role in the Amman economic summit which will take place in October.

In a speech delivered at the opening ceremony of the second meeting of the French-Jordanian Businessmen's Council, Hamdi Tabaa, president of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA), expressed hopes that the French government and the private sector in France would play a major and effective role in the Amman summit.

Arab-French joint projects might be of great interest to both countries especially after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli treaty, he said. The region is expected to enjoy stability after long decades of troubles and conflicts if the other party was committed to its obligation vis-a-vis a just and durable peace for all countries in the Middle East.

"We fully support our government's quest for peace, but it is clear that Israel is not exerting any effort to implement the peace treaty," he said.

Vice President of the Jordanian Businessmen's

Association Fakhri Bilbeisi tackled the Arab-French economic exchange in light of the countries' relations with Iraq. In a working paper entitled the relationship between Iraq and Jordan, Mr. Bilbeisi said Iraq had long been a profitable partner for Jordan and France.

The bulk of trade between France and Iraq has reached \$7 billion, a year before the embargo was imposed, Mr. Bilbeisi said. Iraq, he added, had been the main commercial partner of Jordan, and the bulk of trade between

them exceeded \$600 million annually, also before the embargo was imposed.

Mr. Bilbeisi called for lifting the embargo on Iraq, which he said, constitutes one of the forms of total destruction.

"The special and promising role that Iraq plays in the market necessitates the coordination of efforts of both countries to initiate joint projects," he said.

The Jordanian delegation arrived in the French capital last Saturday after a four-day visit to Denmark.

For the first time in Jordan
For the first time in Eastern Amman

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Al-Wehdat - Opposite Al-Badiyah
Police Station

Japan cult claims rivals framed it over gas attacks

TOKYO (R) — The Japanese cult under investigation over the nerve gas attacks in Tokyo's subway which killed 11 people claimed Monday a rival Buddhist group carried them out to try and frame it.

The Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth) sect made the allegation as it stepped up a publicity campaign aimed at clearing its name over the March 20 attacks in which about 5,000 people were also injured.

The accused group described the claim as ludicrous.

Police have uncovered more than 100 tonnes of 40 different chemicals at the Aum Shinri Kyo sect's facilities, including all the constituents of sarin, the gas unleashed on the trains.

The sect's chief spokesman Fumihiko Joju said the accusations against it were "a great plot by someone going

to attack or oppress and wipe out our organisation."

He made it clear that the "someone" in question was the Soka Gakkai, a Buddhist group with several million members that backs the Komeito political party.

"This religious organisation is part of Japanese politics and has its own political party," he said.

Mr. Joju alleged that as well as the gas attacks, the Buddhist group was responsible for a series of unsolved incidents to which Aum has been linked, including last week's attempted assassination of Japan's national police chief by a masked gunman.

Soka Gakkai immediately released a statement denying the allegations.

"Aum Shinri Kyo originally blamed the U.S. military and then attributed the incidents to the Japanese national authorities. Their attempt

now to implicate the Soka Gakkai is inconsistent and ludicrous," it said.

Home Affairs Minister Hiromu Nonaka told parliament the allegations against the Soka Gakkai were baseless.

Mr. Joju was speaking in fluent English at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan in the latest of a series of public appearances in which he has insisted on the cult's innocence.

Wearing trademark turquoise pyjamas, he has become a familiar face on television and is said to be the deputy of bearded leader Shoko Asahara, who is ill and has remained in hiding since the gas attacks.

But his statements have been made against a background of almost daily finds of more hidden stocks of dangerous chemicals and sophisticated equipment at the sect's facilities at the foot

of Mount Fuji, west of Tokyo.

Joju said all the cult's activities were aimed at preserving Mr. Asahara's teachings, and the chemicals uncovered were aimed at making the cult self-sufficient so it could survive the armageddon it thinks is coming around 1997.

He also alluded to the hard task police are having in nailing the cult for the attacks. After nearly two weeks of raids they have yet to charge anyone for the gassing.

"Those kinds of things they found in our organisation are used for industrial purposes. They have to prove that we were using them to make nerve gas and they have to prove we have a motive," Mr. Joju said.

"We have no motivation to kill people indiscriminately on the Tokyo subway or to kidnap people. We are Buddhists who love peace."

Hillary Clinton: I earn my own bread

MOSHITHATI VILLAGE, Bangladesh (AFP) — U.S. first lady Hillary Clinton called on Bangladesh village women Monday to keep earning even after they marry, while hinting she may soon have to go back to work herself.

"I earn my own bread," Mrs. Clinton told one woman in this remote village in western Bangladesh, adding that all women should do the same.

"It is very important that women should earn even after their marriage and I started to work when I was 13 years old," she told a group at a centre for women's development run by the Gramen Bank, an institution supported by the American first lady.

"I sometimes even earned more than my husband," she added. Mrs. Clinton, who is on a five-nation Asian swing accompanied by daughter Chelsea, said she was not working at present but that she might have to go back to work soon.

Her audience did not ask the first lady whether this meant she didn't expect her husband Bill Clinton to serve a second term as U.S. president.

Muslim fundamentalist groups have asked the government to ban non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like the Gramen Bank which they claim are "anti-Islamic."

The bank provides easy loans for poultry farms, vegetable gardens, handicraft and other sources of earning.

Asked by another woman whether she would like another child, her reply was translated into Bengali by bank chief Muhammad Yunus as a smiling Chelsea looked on.

"I have this daughter and I am very happy with her."

On Sunday, Mrs. Clinton met the man for whom she is named — mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary, the conqueror of Mount Everest.

The wife of the U.S. president was greeted by Sir Edmund, 75, at Kathmanu's Tribhuvan International Airport when she arrived to take a plane out of Nepal after a three-day stay.

Mrs. Clinton told reporters in Nepal that her mother, Dorothy Rodham, read an article about Sir Edmund while she was pregnant and that explained the unusual spelling of her name.

"She read an article in 1947 and that was before he climbed Everest. So when I was born, she called me Hillary and she always told me it was because of Sir Edmund Hillary," she said.

Sir Edmund said it was "sheer coincidence" that their paths had happened to cross. The soft-spoken adventurer runs a foundation that builds schools and clinics in the Himalayas and he had come to Nepal on a visit.

The New Zealander, who climbed the world's highest peak in 1953, saying he had done so "because it was there," noted that Mrs. Clinton's fame now exceeded his own.

"In America before, if anybody recognised the name Hillary it was always me, and now they say, 'oh, you must be a lady,' he said.

Filipina maid tortured in Singapore — daughter

MANILA (AP) — The daughter of a Filipino maid hanged in Singapore for a double murder said Monday her mother claimed she was tortured and drugged into admitting the crime.

Russel Contemplacion said she and her three brothers spoke with their mother, Flor Contemplacion, almost daily for more than two weeks before she was hanged on March 17.

Mrs. Contemplacion was sentenced to death for the 1991 killing of another Filipino maid, Delia Maga, and Mrs. Maga's 4-year-old Singaporean ward, Nicholas Huang.

"During our conversations, she repeatedly said she did not kill Delia Maga and Nicholas Huang," Miss Contemplacion told a presidential commission investigating the case.

Singapore rejected appeals for a postponement of the execution, including several pleas for clemency from President Fidel Ramos.

The hanging has severely strained relations between the two countries. Mr. Ramos has threatened to sever diplomatic ties if the commission finds that Mrs. Contemplacion was unjustly hanged.

Last Thursday, a government medical examiner expressed doubts that Mrs. Contemplacion could have committed the crime. Dr. Maximino Reyes said an autopsy of Mrs. Maga's remains showed extensive injuries on her body, suggesting that the

killer was someone much stronger, possibly a man.

The Singapore forensic report said she died of strangulation, but Dr. Reyes said she was strangled only "to finish her off."

On Sunday, the Singapore government said it accepted Mr. Ramos' proposal for an independent review of the original autopsy report to resolve the conflicting claims.

Dr. Reyes said there was "no need for a third party," he suggested that Singaporean and Filipino medical examiners conduct the study of the remains in Manila.

Miss Contemplacion said her mother told her she was forced to admit the killings because she was electrocuted and made to take drugs while in police custody.

She also said a Philippine embassy official allegedly told her mother to confess and to display insanity in hopes of receiving lighter punishment.

"She believed this and this is what she did," Miss Contemplacion said.

The Contemplacion family lawyer, Romeo Capulong, also told the commission that court records showed Mrs. Contemplacion was convicted based on a confession she made without the assistance of a lawyer and "extracted under duress."

Quoting from the records, Mr. Capulong said Mrs. Contemplacion admitted the crime because "the police kept scaring me" on the night of her arrest.

Major's party faces disaster in Scottish polls

EDINBURGH (R) — Britain's ruling Conservatives could suffer an almost total wipeout in elections in Scotland this week for new local authorities, political analysts said.

Pollsters predicted that the Conservatives would win control of only one of the 29 new councils which will take over local government responsibilities in Scotland on May 1996.

The Labour Party would get at least 17, the Scottish Nationalists three, independents four and there would be no overall control in the rest, they said.

The forecasts reinforced a series of national opinion polls which have consistently shown Prime Minister John Major's Conservatives trailing the opposition Labour Party by around 25 percentage points.

A senior government minister, Employment Secretary Michael Portillo, admitted over the weekend that his party was in deep trouble.

"The crisis that is faced by our party is not that they (supporters) have lost faith in what we want to do or what we have done, but rather that the differences between the parties has become blurred," he told London Weekend Television.

Mr. Portillo, often portrayed by the media as a possible future prime minister, denied that he would ever throw down the gauntlet to Mr. Major.

"If the Conservative Party gets into the habit, half-way through each parliament, of removing its leader, I don't think it's going to do the party any good," he said.

The Labour Party's finance

Yeltsin signs law on AIDS

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin has signed a controversial law on AIDS which obliges foreigners planning long-term stays in Russia to prove they are HIV-free, a presidential spokesman said Monday.

A spokesman at Mr. Yeltsin's press service said the president signed the law — which takes effect on Aug. 1 this year — Friday in the southern Russian town of Kislovodsk where he has been spending his vacation.

AIDS activities and many medical specialists oppose the legislation, saying several articles are medically senseless and discriminatory. But Mr. Yeltsin ignored their last-minute pleas not to sign the law.

"It was so unexpected that we haven't yet had time to decide what to do. We hoped Yeltsin would not sign it," said Oleg Frolov, a member of Moscow's AESOP sexual health information centre which played a leading role in fighting the law.

"We sent him an open letter and believed in our souls that he wouldn't do it," he said by telephone.

AESOP's letter, sent to Mr. Yeltsin on March 30, said the law was an attempt to erect a new iron curtain around Russia.

It said that rather than passing laws, the country should instead devise programmes geared to helping people learn about AIDS and how to avoid contracting the disease.

The State Duma lower house of parliament approved the law on preventing the spread of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS, on Feb. 24.

Russian health officials say it is a necessary part of efforts to prevent AIDS spreading.

"Russian Health Minister experts who drafted the law said Russian medical officials were merely obliged to make every effort to protect their compatriots from being infected with the imported disease," ITAR-TASS news agency said.

Taiwan aborts Spratlys mission to avoid conflict

TAIPEI (Agencies) — Taiwan Monday aborted an armed patrol boat mission sent to emphasise its claims in the disputed Spratly Islands, backing away from possible conflict in the tense South China Sea.

The National Police Administration (NPA) ordered a three-boat patrol, which Sunday was moored between Taiwan and the Spratlys, to return to the Pescadores Islands, some 50 kilometres west of Taiwan.

"For the sake of the safety of the men and boats and to avoid triggering complicated international conflicts, we have directed the boat team to temporarily cancel their work," the NPA said in a statement.

The Spratlys, widely seen as a possible flashpoint in the region, are a potentially oil-rich cluster of islets, reefs and atolls claimed wholly or in part by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

The Taiwanese boats were moored at the Taiwan-occupied Pratas Islands,



Romanian army soldiers remove debris of the last Friday during investigation works at Brussels-bound Tarom Airbus that crashed Balotesti on the outskirts of Bucharest (AFP)

Romanian plane diverted in bomb threat

BUCHAREST (R) — A Romanian Tarom Airlines plane bound for Paris was forced to land at Timisoara in the west of the country Monday following a bomb threat three days after a Tarom Airbus crashed in mysterious circumstances.

At the same time air accident investigators probing Friday's crash of the Airbus A310 just after takeoff from Bucharest's Otopeni Airport, killing all 60 aboard, said they were looking at the theory there might have been an explosion on board.

The director of the Bucharest Morgue Vladimir Belis said it was his personal belief the victims may have died from an explosion in the air but acknowledged he had no firm evidence.

"My personal belief is that the victims have died due to an explosion in the air," he told a news conference. He said that he based this view on his experience, charring on the bodies, and what he had read in Romanian newspapers.

Aviation sources in Timisoara told Reuters Monday's

Tarom BAC 1-11 aircraft bound for Paris was forced to divert to the city after its pilot was told a bomb was on board. The aircraft landed safely, and its passengers and crew were evacuated.

The French embassy in Bucharest said earlier an anonymous telephone caller had claimed responsibility for Friday's crash by planting a bomb on board.

A Romanian member of the investigating team told Reuters the bomb theory was being looked at closely. "We have several reasons which suggest that there could have been an explosion on board the plane before it crashed, but nothing can be said for certain at the time being."

The source, who declined to be named, said he was unable to elaborate on his suspicions at this stage.

One eyewitness has said he saw an explosion on board the aircraft before it crashed and exploded in a snow storm three minutes after take-off. The same flight to Brussels was the subject of a bomb threat on March 15, but no

device was found.

French press attaché Joseph Casals earlier told Reuters: "The French embassy received a phone call late Saturday from a man who spoke unaccented French and who claimed that he had placed a bomb on the Tarom flight to Brussels."

He said the call was taken seriously enough to relay it to Romanian authorities. Romanian police had no immediate comment.

Mr. Casals said the caller did not say why he might have placed a bomb aboard the flight. "He did not give a reason for that. He did not claim the act on behalf of a group."

Thirty-two Belgians were among those killed on the Brussels bound flight and the Belgian ambassador to Bucharest said earlier he was sure the crash was an accident, not a "malicious act."

Tarom has however emphatically ruled out pilot error as the cause of the airline's worst ever crash, saying it was looking at every other possibility, including a bomb or sabotage.

Seoul starts huge military exercises

SEOUL (AP) — South Korea began massive military training exercises Monday amid escalating worries over the fate of a deal to freeze rival North Korea's nuclear programme, suspected of developing weapons.

The combined tactical exercises, the largest South Korea has staged on its own in recent years, will continue until Saturday near the eastern front line, with 80,000 troops from the army, navy and air force participating.

Defence Ministry officials said.

They said the exercises also will involve reservists, but did not disclose the number.

Similar exercises will be held later this year along the Western front line, the officials said. Seoul, the capital, is only 56 kilometres from the North Korean border.

Ministry officials said the first-day exercises included air drops of food for ground troops moving to positions in rugged mountains. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Kim Hong-Rae joined in, flying an F-5F jet fighter.

"I flew a sortie to check for myself the readiness of our air force against North Korea, which keeps increasing tension," Gen. Kim told local reporters.

The exercises will reach their peak Thursday with an amphibious assault landing under air cover on the east coast.

South Korea long had held spring exercises jointly with

the United States, but those manoeuvres have been skipped in the past two years to encourage cooperation by North Korea on nuclear issues. The North had contended the exercises spoiled the atmosphere for cooperation.

Last October, the United States and North Korea signed an agreement requiring North Korea to freeze and eventually dismantle its feared nuclear programme by 2003 in exchange for two modern reactors and economic and diplomatic benefits.

But a deadlock has developed over North Korea's refusal to receive those replacement reactors from its southern capitalist rival. The North cities safety but is believed to be acting out of national pride.

U.S. and South Korean officials have warned that they would seek U.N. sanction if North Korea continued to reject South Korea's nuclear reactors, thus blocking the deal.

South Korea will hold high-level talks Friday with the United States and Japan concerning the provision of those replacement reactors, the officials said.

The talks in New York will discuss a proposal North Korea presented at talks with the United States in Berlin last week. The proposal reportedly seeks to restrict South Korea's participation in making and building the reactors.

South Korea long had held spring exercises jointly with

The Defence Ministry officials said the spring exercises had been planned before the nuclear dispute began to worsen in March, and stressed the need for South Korea to maintain a constant vigil against the hardline Communist North.

North Korea invaded its capitalist rival in 1950, starting a three-year war. Their border is the world's most heavily armed, with nearly 2 million troops deployed on both sides.

Because the spring exercises are the first since Seoul regained peacetime operational control over its military last year, they have been expanded to include more offensive manoeuvres and greater cooperation between the different branches of the armed forces, the officials said.

Simulations of amphibious landing under air cover and air assault training have been enlarged in scale, and training against chemical warfare, air raids and attack by sea will be included, they said.

Seoul gave up control over its 650,000-member military during the 1950-53 Korean War, when the United States led U.N. forces in the battle against the North.

South Korea regained peacetime control in December, under the condition that control reverts to the United States in crisis situations.

Cambodian women wed each other

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A traditional wedding ceremony in Cambodia's Kandal province has become the country's most talked about event in decades — because both newlyweds were women, a report said Monday.

Khav Sokha, 35, and Pum Eth, 31, tied the knot in mid-March in what was otherwise a conventional wedding. Khav Sokha — a former motor-taxi driver turned medicine woman — is very much the husband in the partnership, the English language bi-weekly Phnom Penh Post reported. She dresses and speaks like a man and is treated as such by Pum Eth, who calls her "my husband," the paper said. "I love my husband very much. I am confident that I can delight him forever," said Pum Eth, who turned down offers from two men the same day on which Khav Sokha proposed to her. The local authorities, however, were initially reluctant to give their blessing to the betrothal. "The authorities thought it was strange," Khav Sokha said. "But they agreed to tolerate it because I have three children (from a previous marriage)," she said, adding they would not have been allowed a childless marriage. The whirlwind romance started in December when a sick Pum Eth came to Khav Sokha for treatment. "After curing her, I started loving her," Khav Sokha said, adding that she proposed in January. Pum Eth accepted readily. "I had been sick for many years. He cured me and I love him," she said. "I don't like men. My brother-in-law used to treat my sister badly, so I was determined not to marry a man," she added.

Diana's brother berates press over wife

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana's brother Lord Spencer berated British newspapers, calling them "sick" and "evil" for their reporting of his wife's alleged eating disorder. He confirmed that his wife, the 29-year-old Countess Spencer, was being treated at an exclusive clinic in Surrey, southern England, for "psychological problems." Newspapers said she was suffering from bulimia, a slimming disease in which victims force themselves to vomit after eating. Princess Diana herself has been quoted as saying she once suffered from bulimia. Lord Spencer said he planned to protest formally to the Press Complaints Commission about the tactics of journalists who had "constantly harassed" his wife Victoria, a former model. He accused them of using false identities to pester patients at the clinic. "If ever proof was needed that sections of the tabloid newspaper business in this country are riddled with hypocrisy and evil then it was provided today," he said in a statement to Britain's Press Association news agency. "To use someone's medical illness to fill your newspaper has to be the ultimate proof that sick minds dominate this part of the British media."

The commission, consisting mostly of members nominated by newspapers, has no legal powers.

Witnesses 'exaggerate' under hypnosis

LONDON (R) — Witnesses hypnotised so they can testify to police may exaggerate if they think their testimony cannot be checked, British psychologists said Sunday. Mark Kebell and Graham Wagstaff of the University of Liverpool said tests on 196 subjects showed hypnosis may be an unreliable way of improving witnesses' memory. According to earlier studies, hypnosis could improve recall by up to 60 per cent. But Kebell and Wagstaff said this may be because witnesses in real life were often certain that their testimony could not be verified. "Five experiments were conducted, looking at the effects of a variety of motivating instructions, including hypnosis, and the verifiability of answers, on eyewitness reports," they told a conference of the British Psychological Society. "The experiments compared the number of faces which subjects estimated they could identify in a recognition task. It was predicted that subjects whose answers could not be verified would estimate more faces than subjects whose answers could be verified."

He also said he was unable to inspect the four Chinese boats that were seized by the Philippine Navy in the Spratlys on March 25 in the latest showdown between the two countries.

President Fidel Ramos has rejected Chinese demands to free the fishermen, saying they had violated international laws on protecting the environment.

called charges against them "sheer lies by some people who want to destroy the relationship" between China and the Philippines. He did not elaborate.

"We want the Philippine government to release them as soon as possible because we do not want to complicate things," he told reporters.

Mr. Guo said the Chinese embassy provided food and medicine to the fishermen after they complained of getting diarrhoea from consuming prison food and water.

He added that he was returning to Manila later Monday but would not comment on any future actions by the embassy.

He also said he was unable to inspect the four Chinese boats that were seized by the Philippine Navy in the Spratlys on March 25 in the latest showdown between the two countries.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Will Israel ever learn?

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin was right Sunday to admit that there was no military solution to end the attacks of the Lebanese resistance fighters on the Israeli occupation forces in South Lebanon. "There is only a diplomatic solution" to the conflict in Lebanon, Mr. Rabin is reported to have told the Israeli cabinet.

On the surface, the belated Israeli recognition of the inevitability of a political settlement to its conflict with Lebanon might seem assuring. It could carry within it the message that Israel has finally accepted to come to terms with the fact that its continued occupation of Lebanese territory and its continued use of its military might will not bring it the security that it claims to be its number one priority.

But no one should tip his hat to Mr. Rabin for reaching this realisation. For one, it is a shockingly late acknowledgement of a fact that Israel has chosen to neglect for years. Second, Mr. Rabin fell short of spelling out what he meant by a diplomatic solution. If one is to go by Israel's record in interpreting what a political solution means, the answer would be that Israel wants to take all, and give nothing.

There is no question that only a political settlement can remove the shroud of fear and destruction that Israel has faced not only on Lebanon but on the whole of the Middle East for decades. But that settlement should right the wrong; it should end the Israeli occupation of Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian lands.

Hizbollah is a resistance movement that was created to end the suffering that Israeli occupation of Lebanon has brought upon the Lebanese people. The movement's right to fight the Israeli invaders is a basic human right that is upheld by all peoples, sanctioned and endorsed by all international laws.

Hizbollah men and women are freedom fighters trying to liberate their land from a vicious occupation that continues for no other reason but Israel's arrogance, complexes and belief that its superior power can legitimise the illegitimate, justify the unjustifiable and deny others all that it claims for itself.

There is only one solution to the conflict in Lebanon: Israel must get out of every inch of Arab territory. And that can be achieved through a long and bloody war to the suffering of everybody or through a diplomatic settlement. The choice is for Israel.

It can be said that solution immediately. Both the Lebanese and Israeli people are paying dearly for the conflict in South Lebanon. But both peoples have one side to blame for their miseries: It is the Israeli government, its refusal to do what it takes to bring peace to the area and its inability to break out from a bubble of arrogance and insecurity in which it is burying its head.

The "diplomatic solution" that Mr. Rabin spoke of would require Israel to burst this bubble, open its eyes to the real reason why Hizbollah fighters fire their Katyushas on Israeli occupation soldiers and get those soldiers out of Lebanon, once and for all.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily in its editorial on Monday dealt with comments by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, at a cabinet session on Saturday. It said Prince Hassan called on Jordanians to work as one team. It said that over decades, the Jordanian people's modesty did not allow them to declare their distinction in word and deed despite the fact that the country had always carried out its duty and at times more than it was required. It said this allowed others to throw many charges at Jordan in spite of all it did for the nation. Therefore, Prince Hassan's calls regarding the challenges and countering them is one of his top concerns because of the 30 years he spent in dealing with these challenges. Al Ra'i said. It said this made the Crown Prince an example of the kind of leadership needed in many countries those aspirations are much more than their capabilities. It continued that the national achievements accomplished under Prince Hassan's daily supervision is something like a miracle that others should follow.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour on Monday expressed astonishment at an American proposal being currently worked out to allow Iraq to export \$2 billion of oil every three months to meet its humanitarian needs. Mohammad Ka'wash said the media campaign, which accompanied the preparation of the proposal tried to demonstrate the American sympathy with the besieged Iraqi people and tried to show the American measure as a response to the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. He said after studying cuts for compensation, expenses for committees, and salaries of (U.N. inspection) teams and delegations, the remaining amount would appear insufficient for buying medicine and food and even not enough for the needs of one Iraqi city. He said that the real objective behind the American proposal, which is being prepared by U.S. representative the U.N., Madlin Oibright, is to extend the siege.

The View from Fourth Circle

Salvation, marketplaces and our children's future

By Rami G. Khouri

THERE IS a broad consensus in Jordan that we are passing through a moment of great historical importance, but there is no clear consensus on what kinds of changes we should institute or on a vision of where we are heading. How we navigate this moment in our modern national history will probably define the nature and condition of Jordan and Jordanians for many decades or even generations to come. It is important, therefore, not to get lost in the small details of what happens today or tomorrow, but, rather, to focus on long-term principles and ideals that can assure the best interests of Jordan and the wider Arab World in the longer term.

A longer term perspective on our identity, condition and aspirations suggests to me that we should focus on several related issues that I would summarise as the four I's: identity, investment, institutions and information.

The identity issue requires that we affirm the logical long-term identity of Jordan within its natural national context. This sounds simple, and it is simple. Will we seek to assure our well-being as a dynamic element in a wider Arab environment — as history suggests we must — or will we depend on political, economic and security relationships with non-Arab parties, such as Israel and the United States, for our well-being? Our policies and orientations today reflect a certain tug-of-war between these two orientations. While short-term realities dictate our coming to terms with the reality of Israeli and American power, Jordan's longer term national well-being requires that we revitalise and expand our relationships with our natural Arab hinterland.

The temptation to rely on relationships with Israeli and American parties for our long-term well-being is strong, but probably fatally misguided. A more compelling approach would see us recognise the certainty of substantial changes in the pan-Arab environment in the decades ahead, especially in view of the inevitable transformations towards more participatory, humane political cultures that will occur in countries such as Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia — geographically and culturally contiguous lands that have always defined, and will always define, the political condition and economic orientation of smaller lands such as Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon.

It is virtually axiomatic that Jordan in the early years of the next decade will find itself redefining itself in relation to changing geo-political configurations in the two regions that have always been the primary determinants of our national orientation — the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. Our relationships with Israel and the United States, therefore, should be managed on the basis of optimising short-term benefits, but within a long-term vision that sees Jordan deriving national sustenance primarily from compatible Arab cultures and contiguous Arab economies.

The investment question is emerging as the immediate

criterion that may determine our long-term orientation. We find ourselves today in the peculiar position of running after foreign investments, while domestic investment remains rather subdued, mainly due to political and psychological uncertainties about what the future holds.

Investors usually make their decisions on intuition and gut feelings, and many Jordanians seem uncertain of what the future holds. Should we invest our money in a manner to tap the enormous Arab market around us, or should we instead focus on joint ventures with Israeli, European, Japanese and U.S. partners, aimed at the global market?

One reason that domestic economic activity has not responded to the promise of the peace accord with Israel is the out feeling among many Jordanian investors that we are moving too quickly towards a dependency relationship with the United States and Israel, while insufficiently strengthening political and economic ties with the Arab states. Investors and their capital are naturally cautious, and their natural caution is compounded today by the added political uncertainty of how reliable or lasting are the ties that we are developing with the U.S. and Israel.

The manner in which we have had to lobby the American Congress at the highest level on implementing the American pledge to write off our debt is symptomatic of the larger fears that haunt many Jordanians: fears that the U.S. and Israel will court us and provide some assistance in the short run to serve their national interests, but that they will eventually abandon us when we are no longer particularly useful to their geo-strategic interests. The recent examples of great power ties with Somalia and Ethiopia are instructive in this respect.

The extraordinary current emphasis on attracting foreign investment and aid to Jordan should be a sign that something is fundamentally distorted in our economy. There is no lack of indigenous Jordanian entrepreneurial skills, capital or national commitment required to promote domestic investments, especially given the huge natural Arab market at our doorstep. The double fact that we have to run after foreign investments and that we have achieved limited successes in this endeavour should wake us up to the fact that our salvation does not rest of foreign shoulders, but rather on our own.

This raises the third criterion I mentioned above, that of institutions. Our inability to institutionalise our national political and economic life remain one of our most fundamental weaknesses. We have achieved many successes in Jordan primarily because of the manner in which individual leadership has been able to mould and motivate the many tribal strands of Jordanian society into a coherent whole. We have been blessed with much nobility and wisdom in our leadership and in our people; but we have been unable to weave these elements into a more durable, institutionalised national structure that can, for example,

address the enormous challenges and opportunities that face us today.

The intellectual poverty of our political parties, the absence of credible, independent research centres, the inanimate condition of most of our colleges and universities, the sad polarisation of our media into fawning government groupies or hysterical opposition scandal sheets, and the virtual hibernation of our parliament vis-a-vis the world of ideas and conceptual thinking are all signs of our failures to institutionalise several critically important elements that we will need to navigate through the coming years and decades: honest discussion of public policy issues, consensus-building on national goals and values, and a capacity to deal and negotiate with foreign parties on the basis of a solid domestic position arrived at through credible, institutionalised and participatory mechanisms. Israel and the United States are strong, for example, precisely because they have nurtured and developed these elements.

The last issue I mentioned above — information — may not be an obvious one at first glance; but, I believe that even a cursory view of what is happening around the world should indicate the importance of accurate, freely available information as the vital basis for political and economic well-being. While we have certainly improved in Jordan in recent years in our capacity to allow a more free flow of information, we remain woefully negligent in our recognition of the need to make substantial changes in how information is made available to, and used by, the average citizens. Instead of spending time, money and energy on car and mobile telephones that serve a small, rich elite, our government should instead be implementing a crash programme to permit every Jordanian child and adult to have easy, affordable access to the new global playing field — the information superhighway, or at least that part of it that is known as the Internet.

We will meet our national challenges and take advantage of our opportunities only if we successfully unlock and tap the dynamism and creativity that are within every Jordanian individual. Debt write-offs, economic summits, foreign investment, joint projects with Israel, regional development banks, and other such endeavours are useful and they will help; but they cannot possibly form the core of our efforts to translate peace and regional stability into a new era of Jordanian prosperity and self-confidence.

Our salvation lays not primarily in the global economic marketplace; it lays primarily in the old, rich and potentially enormous marketplace of our own ideas, where the currency of personal freedom and initiative is the medium of exchange that will ensure a better future for our children. If there were ever an opportune moment for us to tap our own human wealth in the service of our future generations, this is it.

What future for the Arab League?

By Faris Glubb

THE LEAGUE of Arab States was 50 years old on March 22. But instead of being an occasion for celebration, this anniversary was provoking pessimistic questions by Arab commentators about the league's future, and whether it can even survive in the new Middle East order ushered in by the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Disappointment is often expressed at the league's failure to resolve that crisis precipitated by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, to prevent the fragmentation of the Arab World that resulted, or to achieve inter-Arab reconciliation since Iraq's action, indeed, resulted in what many consider the worst disaster in Arab history since Hula-gu's destruction of Baghdad in 1258, and placed the Arab countries in their weakest bargaining position in the history of their confrontation with Israel.

It appears that the Arab League, or even any purely Arab collective organisation, would be excluded from such a new regional order. Whether it would be scrapped altogether, or expanded and its membership rules changed in order to accommodate Israel, the Arab League as an organisation to promote the Arab countries' collective interests and protect them from their enemies

would cease to exist. There is anxiety over the league's chances of survival because of what many Arabs regard as "the malicious aspect of the Arab-Israeli peace process," namely the effort by the United States and Israel to replace the Arab World's collective identity with a Middle Eastern regional order. This approach was symbolised by the Middle East economic conference in Casablanca last November, which aimed at creating economic conditions that would further U.S. and Israeli aims in the peace process.

It appears that the Arab League, or even any purely Arab collective organisation, would be excluded from such a new regional order. Whether it would be scrapped altogether, or expanded and its membership rules changed in order to accommodate Israel, the Arab League as an organisation to promote the Arab countries' collective interests and protect them from their enemies

would cease to exist.

A mixed record

In its five decades, the Arab League has had a mixed record of successes and failures. It failed to prevent numerous inter-Arab bloodbaths, like the civil wars in Lebanon and Yemen, and of course the invasion of Kuwait. But it has succeeded in securing some economic, diplomatic and information coordination in the Arab-Israeli conflict, notably in enforcing the Arab boycott of Israel. This is an important Arab bargaining card in the effort to make Israel withdraw from occupied Arab territories. The league has been effective in limiting the extent to which foreign countries and their companies benefit the Israeli economy.

In view of propaganda against this in the West, particularly the U.S., it should be recalled that international law regards a boycott of enemy products

as a perfectly legitimate method of economic warfare. Indeed, the U.S. has used it more than any other state in modern times, both unilaterally and collectively with other states in a U.N. framework often without dubious justification. The U.S. used to boycott the People's Republic of China, for example. At present it maintains unilateral boycotts of Cuba and Iran because it dislikes their political systems, not because of any genuine grievance.

The desire to ensure the survival and a future role for the Arab League, to prevent further erosion of Arab solidarity and improve the Arab bargaining position in negotiations with Israel, were probably the strongest motivations for the summit conference which King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Presidents Mubarak of Egypt and Assad of Syria held in Alexandria last December. These points were clearly emphasised by the joint

communique they issued at the end of the summit, in which they "agreed that the role of the Arab League and its institutions should be boosted." The communique also stressed the need of solve inter-Arab problems and restore Arab solidarity.

Many commentators feel that Arab governments and peoples have been unable to shake off their malaise since the Gulf crisis, and are now passively accepting almost anything imposed on them by the Arab-Israeli peace process. Yet these commentators feel it would be unwise to accept the argument that they should sacrifice the Arab League for the sake of a peace process whose success is by no means guaranteed.

Short of an unexpected radical change in the situation, the Oslo agreement between the PLO and Israel seems doomed to collapse. It is difficult to imagine the peace process

failing in Palestine and succeeding with other Arab countries. Arab governments may be wiser to base their policies on the calculation that the peace process is more likely to fail than to succeed. If it fails, they will need the Arab League to coordinate Arab efforts to face the difficult circumstances likely to follow. Military coordination in particular will need to be much more effective than hitherto.

Even if the peace process does succeed, the Arab League will still be needed to protect Arab interests. Egypt, for example, is still suspicious of Israel's intentions over nuclear weapons and other issues although there has been a peace treaty between them for 15 years. There are plenty of methods by which states can undermine each other's interests without going to war, and Israel has shown itself skilled at these.

Middle East International.

Turkey should get out of Iraq

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — The military-dominated government of Turkey has sent at least 35,000 troops, with tanks and F-16s, into the northern portion of Iraq. That is the "no-fly zone."

The ostensible purpose of the invasion is to kill some 2,500 Kurdish radicals who have been using terror tactics to whip support for an end to suppression of millions of Kurds within Turkey.

That is Ankara's cover story, which the Clinton State Department naively accepted as the invasion began. Hot pursuit of terrorists drew no objection from Foggy Bottom. Nor were questions asked about the disproportionate amount of force being used, or the total press blackout. Soon it will dawn on U.S. diplomats that the Turks are not merely punishing separatist Kurds. If that were the only reason for the attack, Turkey's planes would hit the bases of the terrorist PKK in Syria and the Bekaa in Syria's Lebanon.

Turkey's concealed interest is in the control of oil facilities in Kurdish Iraq. Thirty kilometres of pipe-

line near Fayshkhabur was put beyond Iraq's control. Ankara's generals are eager to do business again with Baghdad. The Kurds are an inconvenience. Because Iraqi President Saddam is prohibited from going in and securing his northern oil facilities, Turkey is doing the job for him. Its forces will stay until Iraqi forces can replace them — if the United States and its allies permit it.

What of the Iraqi Kurds now being bombed by Turkey's Tansu Ciller? At a moment when ethnic unity is vital, and when Kurdish leaders have a chance at last to establish an autonomous enclave of democracy — these wonderful people, with their distinct language and culture, are fighting among themselves.

One faction is led by Massoud Barzani, soft-spoken son of the late Mullah Mustafa Barzani, a legendary chieftain revered by Kurds and their growing legion of supporters. Another is led by Jalal Talabani, smoother and more extroverted than Massoud, and less willing to accommodate the Turks by negotiating with Baghdad.

They both oppose the PKK, a Marxist splinter group that is gaining adherents throughout the five-nation area loosely called Kurdistan, thanks to villagers' fury with Turkey's attack.

Mr. Barzani's angry at Mr. Talabani's recent seizure of the parliament building in Iraq's Kurdish capital of Erbil; Mr. Talabani charges that Mr. Barzani is not sharing customs duties collected from smugglers. Their partisans are shooting at each other. A low-level State Department official tried and failed to restore sanity.

Can this mess be straightened out, with killing stopped, autonomy respected, democracy introduced? America cannot fail to try.

A message of Mam Jalal and Kak Massoud from a longtime friend: Nobody will help you unless you demonstrate you are ready for help. Each of you should fax a letter to President Bill Clinton asking him to send a high-level envoy to Iraqi Kurdistan. Commit yourselves to abide by his recommendations about an immediate ceasefire and a governing coalition in parliament pending supervised elections.

If the Kurdish leaders make their requests, how should President Clinton respond? Not with a multi-lateral handoff. Certainly the United States should ask the United Nations to condemn the invasion and send in observers, but more diplomatic muscle is needed.

We can hope that Mr. Clinton would appoint a prestigious and tough-minded special envoy (on the order of George Shultz, Sol Linowitz or Jeane Kirkpatrick) to quickly repair the Kurdish split, which is something I am told the warring factions want.

Stopping the Turkish invasion may involve a trip to Syria and Bonn (400,000 Turkish Kurds work in Germany), as well as other European capitals.

Then, in Ankara, the envoy's job would be to persuade Turkey's leaders that conciliation with Kurds and inclusion in Europe is more in the long-term Turkish interest than repression of Kurds at home and an oil deal with Baghdad. Such diplomacy is difficult but doable. If America doesn't lead the way, who will?

The New York Times.

LETTERS

Setting the record straight

To the Editor:

WITH GREAT interest I have taken note of your article on the recent cabinet reshuffle in Austria in your edition of April 2. The fact that your newspaper has carried this lengthy report from Reuters is a clear indication that you consider news about our country interesting and important to the readers in Jordan.

The more regrettable is the mistake which occurred in the headline of the article which reads: "New Australian (sic) ministers presented". Austria is indeed far too often confused with Australia. But in a country like Jordan which has long-standing close and friendly relations with our country on both official and private levels, one would not have expected this to happen in one of the leading news-media. Anyhow, I hope for your continued interest in Austrian affairs so that your readers will always be aware that Austria is not Australia.

Dr. Michael Stiglbauer,
Ambassador of Austria,
Amman.

Editor's Note: The Jordan Times regrets the error which was due to a typographical mistake.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

By David Crary
The Associated Press

SARAJEVO — After three years of anguish and isolation, a long-lost mood is back on Sarajevo's shell-scarred streets. It's called confidence, and it has a tough, battle-hardened edge.

Fighting drags on in parts of Bosnia and soon may get worse, but faith in a fast-improving army means the thought of more war no longer terrifies most Sarajevans. The lines of Europe's longest siege in modern times are porous, markets full and munitions stocks abundant.

"We're at psychological advantage," said Kemal Mufic, an adviser to President Alija Izetbegovic's Muslim-dominated government. "The most difficult part is behind us."

When war broke out in early April 1992, death and deprivation came as a shock to this city of cultural sophistication and multi-ethnic tolerance. The intelligentsia spearheaded efforts to preserve this heritage amid horrific artillery barrages, but gradually many intellectuals, artists and doctors left.

Now, more than half the city's 300,000 residents are war refugees, many with small-town outlooks and Islamic beliefs more traditional than those of Sarajevo's relatively secular Muslim community.

The city has changed very much, said Lida Berberovic, a resident in the front-line neighbourhood of Dobrinja. "I can walk all the way from one end to the other and not meet anyone I know. That wouldn't have happened before."

"People bring other customs with them," she said. "You have to try to teach them how it used to be here."

If full-scale war does return after 13 months largely free of attacks by besieging ethnic Serbs, Dobrinja is ready, Mrs. Berberovic said.

"Most of my neighbours think it's about time to solve this with the only alternative left — the military solution," she said.

"If we managed to survive this far, there's no fear



Doctors at a Sarajevo hospital treat a badly wounded young man who is among thousands of Bosnian Muslims who fell victim to Serbian aggression (AFP photo)

Hard-edged confidence emerges in Sarajevo after 3 years of war

"we're going to disappear anytime soon," she added. "Everybody who was scared has run away already."

The new arrivals have provided a loyal constituency for the government's shift to somewhat more ethnically nationalist policies. Mr. Izetbegovic's Party of Democratic Action has put its followers in key army and business posts and Islam is being taught in the public schools.

Some long-time Sarajevans wonder if their

city ever will retrieve the generous, cosmopolitan spirit that so enraptured visitors at the 1984 Winter Olympics. But they take comfort in the brighter military prospects and improved living conditions.

Once-barricaded store shelves brim with food, including piles of fresh fruit that were costly treasures early in the war. For those with German marks, chicken, beef and sausage abound at the central meat market for prices not so different from Paris and London.

No one has to burn books for heat anymore, or lug water from communal taps. Electricity and fuel lines from government-held areas outside the city now run through a tunnel under the U.N.-patrolled airport, out of the reach of Serbs' artillery.

State television news used to show government soldiers in track shoes and mismatched uniforms, equipped with aging rifles. Now they are seen in U.S. army-style helmets and flak jackets, cradling sub-machine guns.

The Bosnian army is gaining ground, making Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic nervous. On Wednesday, Mr. Karadzic threatened an offensive that would include a thrust at Sarajevo.

Sarajevans said they are not afraid.

"Our army is not so strong as to win right now — we are still much weaker in heavy weapons," said Mehmed Halilovic, editor of the newspaper Oslobođenje. "But we have more manpower, more motivation."

The former U.N. military commander for Bosnia who left in January, Lt.-General Sir Michael Rose of Britain, told Germany parliament members Tuesday that it would take Bosnian government forces a minimum of four years to regain lost territory.

Mr. Halilovic said there is no option but to fight.

"Even small victories can increase pressure, equalise the competition. The people are prouder — they feel more confident if the army is capable of advancing," he

said. A peaceful settlement is preferable, "but we don't have a choice. We have to face the challenge."

Mr. Halilovic, whose newspaper has earned international respect for publishing steadily throughout the war, said there had been some abuses of Serbs and Croats in the city, but not on a systematic basis.

"In a town under siege for 36 months, there is a kind of confusion, maybe a lot of inconsistency in policy," he said. "But those in the Democratic Action Party

who favour ethnic nationalism aren't powerful enough to impose it."

Yet the pervasiveness of military influence, coupled with the exodus of so many artists, kindles unease about the future.

"This was a place for new music, new writing. That was the Sarajevo spirit," said Amela Sifer, 24, forced by the war to quit her university studies in English literature. "Now almost all those people are gone. All my friends have left. It's not really my city anymore."

As conditions decline, press is targeted in West Africa

By Tina Susman
The Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — Roland Martin says he wanted to boost the morale of the Sierra Leone army, so he searched his files, found a picture of a combat-ready soldier and printed it on the front page of his newspaper.

His mistake was choosing a picture of a soldier who unbeknownst to Mr. Martin — had defected to the rebel movement a few months earlier, Mr. Martin, editor of Freetown's Weekend Spark newspaper, ended up jailed on suspicion of involvement with the Revolutionary United Front.

In Sierra Leone's government, Mr. Martin's possession of the picture was enough reason to arrest him. To Mr. Martin and other journalists in West Africa's politically volatile countries, it was another case of an embattled government silencing the news media for exposing its weaknesses.

With the region beset by civil wars, military dictatorships and economic decline, the freer press that

evolved in the pro-democracy era of the late 1980s and early '90s is finding itself increasingly muzzled.

At least 12 journalists have been detained in Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria in the past month. Since 1994, West Africa governments have seized dozens of magazines and newspapers, deported journalists, and closed independent radio stations in Cameroon, Togo, Gambia, Mali and Gabon.

"While glasnost in Africa has allowed for an unprecedented mushrooming of independent and opposition publications and radio stations, political leaders, unaccustomed to strident criticism, still tend to lash out," the Committee to Protect Journalists says in a report on attacks on the media in 1994.

Adam Feinstein, who edits a monthly publication of the International Press Institute that monitors press conditions worldwide, said the press is always a scapegoat for governments.

"They can't blame themselves for the problems, so

they have to blame somebody else."

West African governments have recently turned to the courts rather than use overt force to silence the media.

Nowhere has this been felt more strongly than in Ivory Coast, where five newspaper journalists were convicted last month of offences ranging from insulting the president to inciting unrest. Four received sentences ranging from 10 months to 12 months in prison.

That outraged international media organisations as well as Ivorian journalists, who say advances made under President Felix Houphouët-Boigny are disappearing under his successor, Henri Bedie.

"During the time of Houphouët-Boigny, the independent press was just starting out," said Raphael Lape, editor-in-chief of the opposition newspaper La Voie and Le Nouvel Horizon. "By the time he died, the government was beginning to feel at ease with it. But with Bedie, it seems like we've taken 1,000 steps backward."

The Committee to Protect Journalists describes press freedom as having declined considerably since Mr. Bedie took office in December 1993. In Mr. Bedie's first year, seven journalists were convicted on criminal charges tied to their articles.

"We live under constant threat," said Mr. Lakpe.

The dark, dingy La Voie building, with cobwebs in the corners of narrow corridors and faded green paint peeling from the walls, testifies to the disadvantages faced by opposition media. Just down the road, the pro-government daily Fraternité Martin occupies a sprawling, gleaming white compound.

Last year's 50 per cent currency devaluation in the former French colonies of the region led to a doubling of prices for ink, paper and other equipment, compounding problems for the independent press. Official media were not immune — three state-owned newspapers in Congo closed — but they were able to get government subsidies not available to the independent press.

In the region's Anglophone countries, political turmoil has taken a similar toll on the media.

Mr. Martin, the Sierra Leonean editor, was jailed March 13 and freed 10 days later. No charges were filed, but he remains under investigation. In January, two Sierra Leonean journalists were arrested for articles that accused the country's military rulers of partying while rebels launched a major offensive.

Ghana's first independent radio station was closed in a police raid in December and its founder briefly jailed. In February, Kwabena Mensah-Bonsu, a lawyer and newspaper columnist, was sentenced to a month in prison with hard labour for articles deemed contemptuous of some supreme court decisions.

At least two journalists were detained in an alleged coup plot in Nigeria in March. And three journalists were detained in Gambia late in the month.

The closure of radio stations is a particularly effective government tool for affecting public opinion, because the region's high illiteracy rate results in most people relying on radio for news.

Is there oil under the queen's bed?

By Dirk Beveridge
The Associated Press

GERRARDS CROSS, England — Desmond Oswald doesn't quite understand what all the fuss is about. He thinks there's oil under Windsor Castle so he's going to drill a hole and find out.

Queen Elizabeth II has given her blessing, but a number of her subjects think it's about time to rebel. The very idea of searching for oil under one of England's most cherished landmarks is "appalling," if you ask Elizabeth Still, a Berkshire county councillor.

Mr. Oswald looks at things from a purely geological perspective. In his mind, the only pertinent issues are whether he can find oil — which he calculates at about a 1 in 8 shot — and if, so whether he can produce it.

"What I've got is geologic structure sitting here that hasn't been drilled," Mr. Oswald said in an interview. "It's something that should be drilled. In any other place in the world, it would have been drilled long ago."

This is the same outlook Mr. Oswald took into the oil fields of Libya and Iran during a career that spanned three decades with Chevron Corp. Mr. Oswald, who admits to being "70ish," took early retirement from San Francisco-based Chevron during the oil bust of the mid-1980s.

Why drill under Windsor Castle?

Why not? Mr. Oswald says.

"I'm interested in this geology not to become a billionaire. If it works, it would be the highlight of my career."

Like most major oil company geologists, Mr. Oswald was accustomed to being safely anonymous, and all the attention the Windsor project is getting has caught him off guard.

Big oil companies have layers of executives monitoring projects each step of the way. Thus, nobody gets credit for a good deal but no

body is saddled with the blame when a company blows millions on a bad prospect.

At a big oil company, "if I get an idea to drill for oil and the president of the company approves it, if there's no oil, he doesn't fire me — he approved it," Mr. Oswald said.

When oil is found, the oil company may issue a terse press release and that's that. Mr. Oswald says he didn't realise things would be any different on this deal — his first since leaving Chevron. "I had thought the whole thing could be done quite quietly. I thought we could just get on with the job, then if one found something it would generate a certain amount of attention."

For a while, he was right. Mr. Oswald, a native of Calgary, Canada, began work on the project in 1989 by setting up a private company — Canuk Exploration Ltd. He then cornered the rights to find oil under the castle by gaining a licence that kept any competitors from getting in on the deal as long as Mr. Oswald follows a timetable acceptable to British regulators.

Initially, Mr. Oswald was able to study seismic tests without getting onto the castle grounds. But then came the delicate matter of gaining permission from the Crown Estate Commission, which manages royal properties.

"I pointed out that I had a licence and I meant to exercise that licence and I would be able to advance without being detrimental to them. I pointed out it was unfortunate that the exploration well had to be located right on the castle grounds."

"They had a lot of reservations, but we discussed it and they said subject to certain conditions they would be amenable to it."

His efforts gained only minor attention in the local newspapers. But late last year, as soon as it became time for Mr. Oswald to get an actual drilling permit, the critics started complaining.

Britain's feisty national

press got hold of the story, filling newspapers with cartoons that showed the queen wearing a cowboy hat and hobnobbing with J.R. Ewing, the oil tycoon from the TV show "Dallas."

Stories speculated about the tranquil gardens of Windsor Castle being despoiled by oil pumping units, known in Britain as nodding donkeys.

Mr. Oswald says the attacks were coming from "uninformed and ill-informed scientists" although one strong objection came from a county councillor, Jim Lennox, a former oil company executive who has been wells blow up and doesn't want this happening at the 900-year-old castle.

Mr. Oswald plays down any possibility of a blowout and says images of an oil boom in Windsor are overstated.

Despite the uproar, Berkshire county planning officials gave Mr. Oswald the go-ahead. If he finds oil, he will need further permission to produce it. He says that can be done at a discreet distance from the castle, by drilling at an angle.

The initial drilling will cost about \$800,000, Mr. Oswald believes. The results could be lucrative. Mr. Oswald estimates the rocks under Windsor Castle could contain 50 million barrels of oil or more — although nobody ever knows such things for certain until they drill.

Mr. Oswald's optimism is based on seismic tests that have convinced him that Windsor Castle sits about 300 metres above a reservoir. First, Mr. Oswald will have to drill through 230 metres of chalk, then expects to hit 70 metres of clay before reaching a 30 metre layer of sandstone where he hopes to find oil.

This is the same geologic pattern that extends toward the south, where British Petroleum produces oil from Britain's biggest onshore field, Wytch Farm, albeit from much deeper and older rock layers.

Hamas pledges 'revenge'

(Continued from page 1)

nian National Authority (PNA) denied Hamas allegations that they had conspired to set off the blast.

"To finger Israel as the responsible party is total nonsense," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said.

"Instead of killing other people, those gentlemen killed themselves and thank heaven they did not kill other people."

"We must take into account the risk that Hamas wants to carry out attacks after the Gaza incident. Security forces are on the alert to confront attacks," Mr. Rabin said after a session of parliament's foreign affairs

and defence committee.

He told journalists that Israel had nothing to do with Sunday's blast.

Israel Radio said Israeli security services also feared a wave of attacks.

"We are ready for any eventuality," an advisor to Police Minister Moshe Shahal told AFP, asking to remain anonymous.

Hamas urged people to march at symbolic funerals defying a Palestinian police ban on demonstrations. But as a precaution Palestinian police earlier quietly buried the bodies of Kheil and three other militants killed in the blast.

A woman and child also died and two Hamas mem-

bers were seriously wounded as explosives being handled by the militants went off, Palestinian police said.

A member of Mr. Arafat's Fateh group denounced the group as "irresponsible extremists who had an accident at work."

Palestinian police are hoping the two wounded Hamas men will reveal what happened as a Palestinian inquiry was opened.

In Paris, the Palestinian representative in France condemned the militants who died in the blast, but said there was no way of stopping them carrying out such activities.

Leila Shahid added, however, that Israel had to take some responsibility, accusing it of having sup-

ported Hamas against the PLO and of having supplied arms to the region.

She said the blast "cost the lives of children, and showed the Palestinian population of Gaza how much the presence of this sort of madman ... endangers them."

Stressing that they could not be controlled, she said civilian support was essential if such incidents were to be eradicated. "The most important thing is to have the collaboration of the civilian population," she said.

She added that stopping attacks was impossible. "There is no way to prevent attacks either in Israel or the Palestinian territories," she said. "There is no miracle solution to prevent the attacks."

Aziz urges U.N. to better offer

(Continued from page 1)

Although he lost every case, all the prisoners were later pardoned by President Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Jarjee's visits Monday followed an Iraqi decision to extend the appeal period to one month from the normal 14 days.

Iraqi officials in Baghdad were not available for comment on the case.

However, in Athens, Greece, Iraqi Ambassador Issam Saud Khalil denied his country was using the Americans in their campaign to secure the lifting of the U.N. embargo against his country.

Economy

Oil industry changing rapidly — Price Waterhouse

ADELAIDE (R) — Sales of state-owned petroleum operations will change the world oil industry over the next decade and lead to new alliances, the chairman of Price Waterhouse's World Petroleum Group said Monday.

James Crump told the Australian Petroleum Exploration Association's (APEA) annual conference that crude oil prices have been falling in real terms since 1980, prompting a desperate need for funds to upgrade facilities and cut debt.

But with oil prices expected to remain flat in coming years due to modest economic activity, he said, the industry had to step up the pace of change and go global.

"There will be increasingly fierce competition for scarce private sector capital as reformist governments kick out the sagging props from under state-run oil and gas enterprises and phase out unrealistic subsidies for petroleum products," Mr. Crump said in a speech to the conference.

"The push towards globalisation is driven by the twin goals to cut exploration and development costs and find an elephant oil or gas field," he pointed out.

Mr. Crump said a Price Waterhouse and Petroleum Intelligence Weekly survey of 80 companies from 39 countries controlling 75 per cent of world production showed that 78 per cent of reserves were held by 10 state-owned companies, the largest being Saudi Aramco.

The top 10 holders of natural gas reserves were also state-owned. Russia's Gazprom was the biggest with output eight times as large as second-placed Royal Dutch/Shell and reserves exceeding those of Iran or Qatar.

Mr. Crump said the privatisation push was strongest in Latin America.

Peru's government was committed to privatising Petroperu. Argentina's YPF made an international offering of 59 per cent in 1993, and Brazil was considering selling more Petrobras shares.

He said Asia-Pacific nations were also looking to sell.

Late last year China sold 25 per cent of the equity in Zhenhai Refining and Petrochemical and in 1993 floated 30 per cent of Shanghai Petrochemical.

He said Taiwan's Chinese Petroleum Corp. reportedly planned to sell a minority holding in 1997 and Malaysia's Petronas to hold a further float after selling part of its retail arm in 1993.

Even in Europe, governments were reducing their stakes in oil.

Spain was set to further reduce its holding in Repsol and Hungary planned to dispose of shares in MOL.

Crump said the move to privatisation, as well as globalisation, was creating non-traditional alliances, such as the Aramco/Texaco joint venture Star Enterprises and the Pemex-Shell venture.

"These and other alliances seek to match supply with demand for petroleum products," he said. "Expect to see more such alliances in the years ahead."

EU presses Egypt to open up trade, offers help

CAIRO (R) — The European Union (EU) is pressing Egypt to eliminate tariff barriers with Europe by the year 2010 in return for billions of European Currency Units in aid to help Egyptian industries compete with their European rivals.

The European Union made the offer in a draft "partnership" agreement presented in Cairo Saturday at the start of two days of preliminary negotiations. EU officials said Monday.

The agreement, similar to one signed with Turkey and to those under negotiation with Morocco and Tunisia, would also remove the remaining restrictions on Egypt's exports to the EU, bringing Egypt into a Mediterranean-European free trade zone.

"So far the Egyptians have one big concern — how to open up their market without their industry going down the drain," one EU official told Reuters on the sidelines of a seminar at which the Europeans explained their plans to Egyptian businessmen.

The EU's Mediterranean director, Eberhard Rhein, told the seminar Monday that Europe, acting out of "enlightened self-interest," wanted to close the gap in prosperity between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean.

But Egyptians would have to do most of the work themselves, including such steps as political democratisation and liberalising the media, he said.

"We are both fully committed to democracy, but it seems to mean something different here than it does in Europe... In Europe it means replacing a government when people think that's good," he said.

"And as a benevolent but critical observer, I would say that judging by the newspaper my hotel gives me, you are still very far from taking part in the global society," he added.

But the most complicated part of the economic transformation would be preparing Egyptian industry, protected by a customs duty regime where rates of 70 per cent are common, he said.

"The (Egyptian) government must resolutely step out of business and let businesses do what they do best. The duty of government is only to fix the conditions of a level playing-field," he added.

"Europe has a big responsibility to help you live up to the challenge... we can offer billions of European Currency Units to mobilise those who want to participate," he said.

Egyptian businessmen at the seminar complained that the European Union, while welcoming the free movement of goods and capital, balked at the free movement of labour.

"We've come to the limits of the multicultural society," Mr. Rhein replied. "I cannot imagine we will have free movement of labour in my lifetime, or the lifetime of anyone in this room."

EU officials said that in practice the only remaining restrictions on Egyptian exports were on cotton yarn and cloth, where Egypt exercises voluntary restraints, and on oranges, where Egypt exceeds a duty-free quota.

But some European diplomats at the seminar said they doubted the Egyptian government has the will to open up its market.

"They will have to throw out 80 per cent of their legislation. That's the challenge. As long as business remains stifled by government, they just won't make it," said one.

The negotiators will meet again in Brussels in July, with experts working on the agreement in the meantime.

Industrial nations feel the heat at climate talks

BERLIN (R) — Industrialised nations scrambled Monday to put together a response to proposals from developing countries that threaten to seize the initiative at the U.N.'s global climate conference.

At least 60 developing nations backed a proposal under which they would unequivocally take on no new commitments on cutting emissions of so-called "greenhouse gases" while richer nations would be asked to make steep cuts.

The draft brings together almost all major developing countries present at the 11-day Berlin conference, including regional powers India and China but excluding the group of oil producers.

Almost two days after it was drawn up, deeply divided industrialised countries still had no unified answer or proposal of their own for how to prevent the long-term climate change which scientists say may have catastrophic effects.

"There'll be discussion of the draft and we'll see what comes up," chief U.S. negotiator Rafe Pomeroy said.

The United States, the world's biggest producer of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas and a product of fossil fuel burning, has refused to commit itself to any cut in emissions next century but has pushed for developing countries to do more.

It has found allies in other leading CO₂ producers such as Australia, Canada, Japan and New Zealand but has so far managed to bridge the gap to the European Union (EU), an advocate of clear reduction commitments.

Erhard Jauck, chief negotiator of EU member and conference host Germany, said he expected the conference to "concentrate its business more and more on finding a consensus working from the developing country draft."

He stressed Germany did not accept all the contents of the draft. But by saying it was a useful basis for negotiations he set the EU clearly apart from the United States and put it under increasing pressure to make concrete proposals soon.

The EU applied further leverage with comments from its Environment Commissioner Ritt Bjerregaard. She wrote in the daily Frankfurter Rundschau that the EU should cut emissions by a further 10 per cent between the year 2000 and 2010.

The German hosts hope the Berlin conference will produce a mandate for a negotiating procedure leading within two years to an internationally binding climate protocol.

They want this to include an acceptance that a pledge made by industrialised countries in 1992 at the Rio "Earth Summit" to cut emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 — is not adequate to prevent dangerous man-made climate changes.

Even this modest goal still looked remote Monday, making it increasingly likely that the 60 or more ministers due on Wednesday for the last three days of the conference would have to untangle the knot.

A further obstacle to progress at the conference is the continued failure so far to agree on a voting procedure.

Oil producers are holding out for consensus voting because they fear losing markets if commitments are made to cut CO₂ emissions.

Industry takes lion's share of Syrian investment

DAMASCUS (R) — Private sector investors in Syria pumped more than 233 billion Syrian pounds (\$5.54 billion) into 1,252 projects over the past 42 months as the government eased state controls.

Mohammed Surakbi, director of the Supreme Council of Investment, told Reuters investors put most money into the industrial sector, spending 156.1 billion pounds (\$3.71 billion), or 67 per cent of overall investments, on over 600 projects in the food, textile, chemical, engineering and medical sectors.

"What we achieved during the last three and a half years is very encouraging," Mr. Surakbi said.

He said the government had recently allowed the private sector to invest in state-dominated sectors such as the textile, cement and sugar industries in addition to marine transport in a bid to move towards a free market economy.

The Syrian government has passed several laws aimed at encouraging private sector investment in the country, which for decades followed centralised, socialist-style economic policies.

Economic sources say private investors welcome much laws but were eager for more incentives.

The sources estimate that Syrians have over \$100 billion in overseas banks and were waiting for a better investment climate to bring their money home.

Dollar drops to new lows

LONDON (R) — The dollar dropped to new lows Monday despite repeated intervention by the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) and dealers said any action to help the currency would have to be on a very big scale to change the market's mood.

The dollar fell to 86 yen in U.S. trading, its humblest level since World War II.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said the United States had intervened in currency markets because "this administration believes a strong dollar is in America's interest."

For the first time since February 1992 the U.S. central bank intervened in Asian markets, buying dollars in Tokyo overnight.

At the end of the European trading day, dealers in New York said the Federal Reserve was again active in international markets, aggressively buying dollars for markets.

They said there was no sign of any European central bank joining the Fed to support the dollar.

"I don't expect much change in sentiment until we get the U.S. administration not only telling but also convincing the market that they want a stronger dollar," Peter Wood, a dealer at Bank of Boston in London, said.

With the dollar sliding almost continuously, the Tokyo stock market dropped 4.7 per cent to its lowest since August 1992.

The strength of the yen, which has appreciated by 17 per cent since the beginning of the year, threatened to squeeze Japanese exporters' profits and threaten a shaky economic recovery.

Failure by the Bank of Japan to follow Germany's example last week and chop a key interest rate was the latest trigger for the dollar's fall.

Some dealers argued that a U.S. rate rise could bail out the dollar. But many economists believe even that would not halt the currency's decline, which they link to the United States' big trade and budget deficits and the country's dependence on foreign capital to finance its economy.

The markets will be closely watching U.S. jobs data on Friday for a guide to the performance of the U.S. economy.

Worries about the weakness of the dollar and Japanese shares spilled over into Europe's stock markets, which showed modest gains on low trading volume.

"There's very little activity in the market today," said one London share dealer.

"The dollar and what happened in Japan overnight are the main worries."

In Frankfurt, dealers said floor trade was minimal with investors transfixed by the dollar's continued weakness despite last Thursday's German rate cut.

In Tokyo, intervention to hold down the yen increased Japan's foreign exchange reserves by \$15.58 billion in March from the figure in February, taking the total to a record high amount.

The reserves rose for the 17th consecutive month to \$141.52 billion, the Finance Ministry said Monday.

The new rise, the biggest ever recorded in Japan, broke the previous record of \$10.23 billion set in April 1987. The figure means that the country's reserves have climbed by 39 per cent from the figure in March 1994 of \$101.7 billion.

The increase followed February's rise which shattered the previous record for foreign reserves of \$125.2 billion set by Germany in September 1992.

Japan's Finance Ministry traditionally refuses to comment on the reasons for fluctuations in the reserves, but March's spectacular increase came after the Bank of Japan had intervened massively to support the flagging dollar.

The central bank has repeatedly stepped into the market in recent weeks, buying dollars against the soaring yen in a bid to constrain the fall of the dollar.

U.N. report sees 4% growth rate continuing in East Europe

GENEVA (AFP) — The average four per cent real growth in gross domestic product (GDP) reached by East European countries last year, thanks to the strength of their exports and despite lower direct foreign investment, a United Nations report said Monday.

The study issued by the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe said that in 1994, growth of real GDP in East European countries as a whole, excluding the Commonwealth of Independent State (CIS), had been positive for the first time since 1989.

Those countries have now come through the hardest part of the transition from communism to a market economy approach, the report said, through it noted that growth rates vary widely between five per cent in Poland and Slovenia and stagnation in Bulgaria and Croatia.

Direct foreign investment will be only \$4.3 billion this year against \$5 billion last year, he said. This led Mr. Berthelot to recommend the East European countries base their policies and strategy on national savings.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 4, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Flighter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Early you should schedule your assignment load, and then carry through with it without deviating. Find some new method for increasing your vitality.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Find new ways of getting your talents working more efficiently, but later be more economical in all of your activities today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early get some important matter handled at home and later show poise in handling tasks in the outside world.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Communicate with others this morning and be certain your manner with partners is gentle and kind. Much care must be exercised in driving or walking.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Early handling of financial affairs is wise and later do not take on any more obligations than you can handle easily.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get started on your personal plans early this morning since later today conditions are apt to be difficult. Postpone any appointments until later.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Plan today widely and carry through though you may encounter distractions this evening. Handle the tasks which will give you more free time.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) Look to a good friend for the assistance you need this morning since you find acquaintances are not reliable.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get outside tasks handled this morning, and don't get upset later if a higher-up upbraids you without cause or reason.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You get an idea early today but later you see the flaws in it, so put it aside for a while and pick it up another day when there are more benefits.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Try to please your mate this morning, and then handle your duties efficiently and conscientiously so there is great progress.

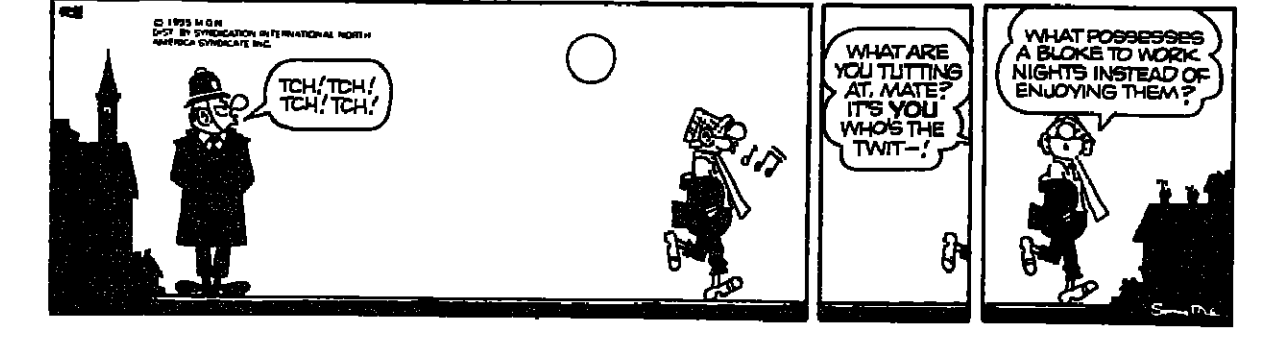
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Have long talks today with a partner so that the relationship is upgraded and there will be greater benefits for you tomorrow.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

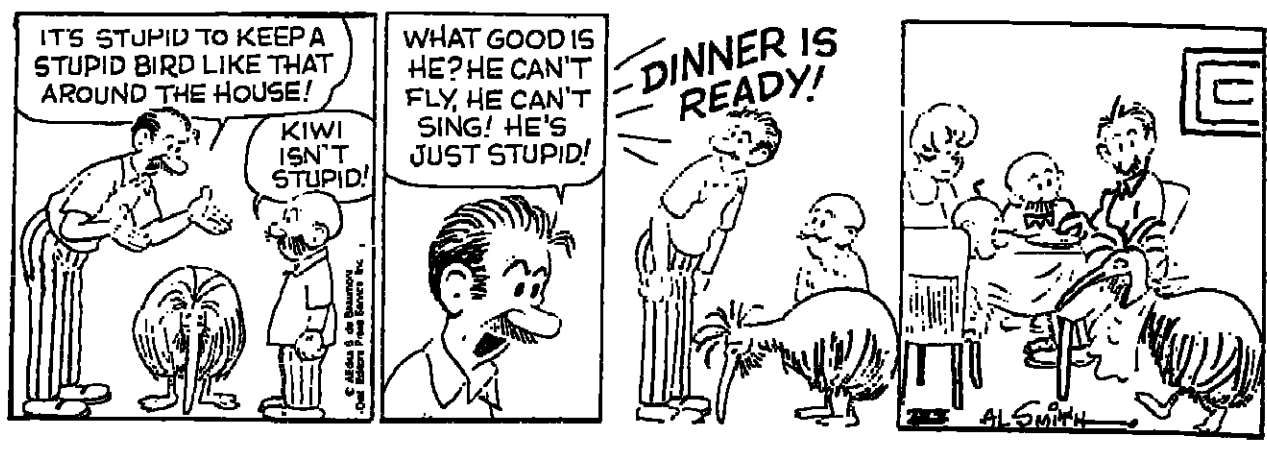
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

"Stanley, when I asked you to kiss me longer, I meant a longer time — not longer lips!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

BIRAB
THEFC
RYLAIF
UMRADA

WHAT THE KIDS LOOKED FORWARD TO AT THE ANNUAL CARNIVAL.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: SNARL PARKA TALLOW POLICE

Answer: Where the candidates stood before the election — POLLS APART

THE Daily Crossword

By Fran Piegus

ACROSS

1 Interest desire
4 Alien and
10 Kin of the
14 Region
15 Construct a
certain benzene
16 Octagonal
17 Man
18 Flash flood
19 Beach sight
20 Playful mammal
22 Highly skilled
23 Ground cover
25 Unidentified
marine animal
26 Pig
31 Hog
32 Gives out cards
again
35 Vegetables
37 Merry
38 Show off
39 Gam and
Hayworth
40 Whale group
41 Cubic meter
42 German name
43 Morning
moisture
44 Medicinal
portion
45 More smelly
47 Minus
48 Bend the head
49 Lizardlike
50 Discouraged
from acting
52 Where the
action is
55 Shore
58 "Poor
Yorick"
61 Dine at home
63 "Zapata"
64 Lute
65 Fur scarf
66 Copycat
67 Used a plane
68 Upright
69 Escapee

DOWN

1 Othello's "friend"
2 Allowance for
waste
3 Penny
4 Dots
5 Central bank for
the U.S.; abbr.
6 Mole
7 Lizardlike
8 Discouraged
from acting
9 Walrus
10 Dejected
11 Lobster, for one
12 — lime (never)
13 Colored
21 Gans
22 Danson
23 Pseudo and
Congo
27 Holbein
28 Old-time violin
29 Antelope
30 Ophidian
31 Slow, musically
34 Spotted horse
35 Voltaire's land
37 Outstanding
success
40 Imbue
41 Like sheep
42 Most expensive
43 Family member
48 Dog g
49 Escapade
50 Address Susan
51 Opponent
52 Holder for a
cotton cap
53 Israel airline
54 Palm
57 State firmly
58 Lute
60 Male stitcher
62 Once called

Strong gold market may not be ready to soar

LONDON (R) — The gold market is in its strongest buying phase for months but might not be ready to push beyond \$400 an ounce, bullion analysts said Monday.

Gold bullion was fixed at \$392.25 an ounce Monday, its highest level since October 1993. A week ago it was \$10 lower and languishing.

Silver was at a five-month high of \$5.3015 an ounce. Now the market pulse is racing towards \$400 for gold, a value not seen since the peak of the last bull market in August 1993.

"The \$400 price could come a little too quickly. It would be better if prices consolidated here for a while," said Andy Smith, precious metals analyst with Union Bank of Switzerland.

Gold began to glow after the Bundesbank lowered interest rates last Thursday, hinting that the most inflation-conscious central bank in the world might be easing its grip.

"What potential investors are looking for are signs that monetary policy is easing (and therefore the risk of inflation is higher). A lot of potential gold buyers were waiting for signs of weakness by the Bundesbank," Mr. Smith pointed out.

Investment funds rushed to buy gold after the foreign exchange markets sent the dollar to even lower levels against the mark than before the German interest rate cut. The combination of no

clear move by the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) central bank to support the dollar and the Bundesbank lowering its rates "must be the happiest signs for gold for many, many months," Mr. Smith said.

He noted that both dollar-priced gold and oil were at their highest of the year which the investor would see as an indication the dollar was profoundly weak.

Gold has traditionally been a safe haven in times of inflation and currency turmoil. But high interest rates reduce its attractions again interest yielding assets like bonds.

Ted Arnold, analyst at Merrill Lynch Futures Research, said gold prices seemed to have established a base at \$385 where buying would be triggered but with a ceiling at around \$395.

"European and Asian traders are taking the view that gold will be a good two-day market for some time to come. The trick is getting out before the Fed raises rates," Mr. Arnold said.

Gold producers were also watching closely trying to judge when to sell gold for delivery at future dates to lock in current attractive prices.

"It looks as though they are waiting too. But anywhere above \$395 should see the volumes increase," a dealer said. "That could cap the rally there unless the funds really get the bit between their teeth."

Top executives quit as Barings report drags on

LONDON (R) — Peter Baring and Andrew Tuckey, the two men who led the once prestigious Barings Investment Bank, Monday had their resignations finally accepted by the new owners Internationale Nederlanden Groep (ING).

The two had offered their resignations as soon as ING took over last month but had been asked to stay on until the British authorities came up with a report on the disastrous derivatives trading by their trader in Singapore, Nick Leeson, that pushed Barings to the brink.

But no report on the events is now likely for months and Mr. Baring and Mr. Tuckey decided to go sooner rather than later.

Sources close to Barings say ING is dismayed that the Board of Banking Supervision is not expected to complete its investigation for another two months because this is restricting the rehabilitation of the Barings name in the financial markets.

The board comprises three Bank of England (BOE) members — the governor, deputy governor and the director in charge of banking supervision, Brian Quinn.

BOE Governor Eddie George said last week that the board would not finish investigating the Barings saga for two months. He added that the report on the lessons to be learnt from the investigation could take a further three months to complete.

The Bank of England says the board's task is a complex one and insists it had not indicated that the report would be available sooner. But staff at Barings are unhappy that a cloud will be

hanging over the bank for months to come.

"The investigation is taking a very long time," said one source close to Barings, "and some clients were not happy that prominent members of the old guard were still there."

But sources made it clear that the pressure for Mr. Baring and Mr. Tuckey to depart had not come from ING.

"ING itself is relatively relaxed," one Barings source said. "They have put no pressure on at all but the fact that the report is going to take so long meant it was difficult for those who may figure prominently to hang on."

Both Mr. Baring and Mr. Tuckey have severed their links with Barings PLC, the old Barings holding company which is still under administration, and Mr. Baring has also cut the cord from the Barings part of ING where he had been a member of a committee advising the board of the new Baring Holding Company Ltd.

Mr. Baring had devoted his whole working life to the bank which carried his family's name and had spent nearly 15 years as chairman. A sweet retirement beckoned but the scandal of hundreds of millions of pounds lost in derivatives trading on Far East markets has left those plans in tatters.

Mr. Tuckey, who over recent years has been credited with developing Barings into a modern investment bank, was more involved with the daily running of Barings since ING took over.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHAMSANI				
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 03/04/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
ARAB BANK PSC	1220	239420	195.000	196.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	13100	61533	1.690	4.670
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	1821	7484	1.570	4.570
THE HOUSING BANK	50	168	3.360	3.360
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	3000	4315	1.450	1.450
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	9850	61504	6.210	6.210
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	15400	44662	2.930	2.900
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	16900	22825	1.300	1.350
BUSINESS BANK	59151	234646	3.980	3.960
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	3850	13518	3.500	3.500
DEIT BLOK SAVING INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	2480	9178	3.690	3.710
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	6780	21202	3.140	3.140
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	148250	187675	1.260	1.250
	47550	67407	1.370	1.390
BANKS SECTOR	329052	975615	INDEX NUMBER: 165.44	CHANGE: +0.44
UNITED INSURANCE	250	663	2.690	2.680
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	500	1110	1.850	1.850
JORDAN FIRE INSURANCE	5900	14460	2.450	2.610
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	1000	2620	2.600	2.620
DELTA INSURANCE	500	1105	2.100	2.210
INSURANCE SECTOR	7900	20118	INDEX NUMBER: 135.80	CHANGE: +0.10
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	11500	19284	1.670	1.560
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	119016	189323	1.590	1.560
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	162689	1138531	6.700	7.040
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	24117	153272	6.450	6.710
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	8150	25053	3.080	3.080
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	14650	33706	2.300	2.270
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	1350	1545	1.120	1.120
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	21750	23070	1.100	0.060
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALBANY	3600	38976	10.710	10.800
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONDOOMORE HOTELS	69500	183176	2.600	2.580
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	6925	23246	3.320	3.350
SERVICES SECTOR	443347	1838260	INDEX NUMBER: 141.17	CHANGE: +0.17
ATTACHED CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1780	2063	1.120	1.150
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	15544	47872	3.050	3.060
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	650	3025	4.650	4.650
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1135	10721	9.450	9.450
THE INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	840	5420	6.400	6.600
THE JORDAN WORTED MILLS	11600	93376	7.750	7.900
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	6370	26951	4.240	4.180
JORDAN CEMENT INDUSTRIES	780	4263	5.450	5.450
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	2900	7849	2.710	2.710
THE PUBLIC MINING	100	288	2.850	2.850
SPINNING & WEAVING	1874	4888	2.610	2.610
BATH INDUSTRIES	5634	14087	2.520	2.490
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	5000	40010	7.900	7.900
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	18550	14837	0.960	0.940
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	11100	78628	6.930	7.000
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	71600	51191	7.700	7.710
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	36850	54678	1.490	1.480
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	10000	3350	3.250	3.350
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	8960	3862	4.300	4.300
JORDAN ROCKWELL INDUSTRIES	1250	1543	1.200	1.230
ALABIN INDUSTRIES	500	2138	4.200	4.200
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHS/THCO	12500	8760	7.100	7.000
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	1350	6205	4.720	4.570
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	9802	15691	1.560	1.560
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	2850	5846	2.070	2.200
SAMIR INVESTMENT	5426	1.600	2.450	2.450
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	4700	16968	3.600	3.650
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	19200	40152	2.050	2.070
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	250209	575066	INDEX NUMBER: 121.89	CHANGE: +0.17
GRAND TOTAL	1030508	3410058	INDEX NUMBER: 145.85	CHANGE: +0.42
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		246596		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		319754		

Financial Markets

In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York	Tokyo
Sterling Pound	1.6425	1.6190**
Deutsche Mark	1.3730	1.3780
Swiss Franc	1.1925	1.1900**
French Franc	4.8090	4.8125**
Japanese Yen	86.60	86.85
European Currency Unit	1.3310	1.3267**

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.06	6.25	6.56
Sterling Pound	6.86	6.31	6.75	7.25
Deutsche Mark	4.43	4.50	4.56	4.81
Swiss Franc	3.25	3.25	3.37	3.50
French Franc	7.37	7.37	7.06	6.87
Japanese Yen	1.75	1.65	1.56	1.56
European Currency Unit	6.50	6.56	6.65	6.90

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	0.6150	0.6170
Sterling Pound	1.1072	1.1127
Deutsche Mark	0.4962	0.4987
Swiss Franc	0.6034	0.6066
French Franc	0.1488	0.1482
Japanese Yen	0.7877	0.7916
Dutch Guilder	0.4434	0.4456
Swedish Krona	0.0400	0.0402
Italian Lira	0.0000	0.0000
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Other Currencies

Currency	Buy	Sell
Lebanese Lira	0.042355	0.042550
Saudi Riyal	0.1623	0.1634
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.3170	2.3700
Qatari Riyal	0.1670	0.1682
Egyptian Pound	0.1980	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7180	1.7820
UAE Dirham	0.1659	0.1672
Greek Drachma	0.2650	0.3165
Cypriot Pound	1.4270	1.5550

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Seles attacker freed

HAMBURG (AP) — The man convicted of stabbing tennis star Monica Seles remained free Monday on a two-year suspended prison sentence after a judge rejected an appeal by prosecutors and the injured athlete's attorney to put the attacker in prison.

Judge Gertraud Goering upheld the sentence given in October 1993 to east German Guenter Parche after he knifed Seles in the back during a tennis tournament, so that his idol, German tennis player Steffi Graf, could again be-

come No. 1 in the world. Seles, 21, has not played professional tennis since then.

She and prosecutors had appealed Parche's conviction on a charge of grievous bodily injury, asking for a conviction of attempted manslaughter, and a prison term instead of a suspended sentence.

The judge said testimony from Seles herself would have been needed to convict Parche on a more serious charge.

"We assume that Parche's act is the reason that

Seles is not able to play tennis anymore, but this can't be said with certainty because Miss Seles was not willing to testify in court," the judge said.

Seles wrote a letter to the court, saying Parche's attack had "destroyed my life."

The judge accepted testimony by police officers and psychiatrists who said that, aside from his fixation on Graf and Seles, Parche was harmless.

"The evaluations were both positive. Both experts expect that he will never be



File photo showing Monica Seles grimacing in pain after she was stabbed at the Hamburg Open April 1993 (AFP photo)

moved to do something like that again," the judge said. "We can't rule out that he meant to do more than he did to Miss Seles, but we also can't prove this," the judge said.

The judge said Parche's confession and his written letter of apology to Seles counted to his credit.

Prosecutor Rolf Rosenkranz had acknowledged in his closing arguments, "from the previous life of the accused, there is nothing to show that he was aggressive."

But Rosenkranz said the 40-year-old Parche should be imprisoned because he had carefully planned the attack, because it was carried out in public, and was in part based on political prejudices.

Parche had spoken of his dislike of Serbs. Seles, an ethnic Hungarian, was born in the Serbian area of

Yugoslavia and is now an American citizen.

On April 30, 1993, Parche stabbed Seles, then 19 years old, in the back while she was sitting on a bench during a break in her match at a tournament at Hamburg's Rothenbaum stadium.

Seles' psychologist, Jerry Russel May, of Reno, Nevada, testified that she was suffering post-traumatic stress disorder. She has trouble doing normal, public daily tasks, such as going to the grocery store, May testified.

But homicide detective Rolf Bauer, who headed the investigation of Parche after the attack, testified at the appeal hearing that Parche had given a credible explanation that he didn't want to maim Seles for life, only put her out of action until Graf could regain the top spot in women's tennis.

Ceron makes London marathon history

LONDON (AFP) — Mexican Dionicio Ceron won a dramatic head-to-head with Australian Steve Moneghetti here on Sunday to retain his London marathon title — and become the first man to win the race twice.

Ceron won in 2hr 08min 30secs, ahead of the Commonwealth champion after the two fought out a sprint over the final 200m.

The 29-year-old winner's time was the second fastest for the event. The record is held by Welshman Steve Jones, who ran 2:08.16 in 1985.

The winning duo had run side by side to whittle down a big lead established by Portugal's Antonio Pinto, the champion in 1992.

Ceron, 29, was delighted with his performance, saying: "I wasn't too worried when Antonio Pinto was ahead because I had confidence in myself and felt very strong over the last four miles."

"I think the pace was too fast and it was too windy for him to do it all on his own," added the 29-year-old.

Pinto conceded he thought the race was his after he had broken away but said he was confused by the markers.

"I had trouble knowing where I was because all the markers were in miles and I'm used to kilometres," he said.

"I thought I was going to win. But I had to run against the wind for the last few kilometres and that did me in."

"Steve Moneghetti and Dionicio Pinto were able to help each other and when they went past me I was too tired to stick with them," he added.

Juventus clash with Borussia Dortmund today

PARIS (AFP) — Borussia Dortmund's Latin feet and influx of Italian league players have assured the club's place among Europe's elite, according to the club's former star Hans Tilkowsky.

Tilkowsky, who kept goal in Dortmund's 1966 European Cup Winners' Cup winning side, predicted a fruitful future for the club, who travel to Juventus in the UEFA Cup semi-final first leg on Tuesday.

Bayer Leverkusen face Parma in the other UEFA Cup clash, making the competition a Germany/Italy battle for European supremacy.

Dortmund meanwhile must forget their 6-1 thrashing on aggregate in the UEFA Cup final two years against the Italian giants.

But former Italian league players, Andreas Moller, Matthias Sammer, Stefan Reuter and Karlheinz Riedle now combine for a more formidable adversary.

No club is clearly dominating Europe, said Tilkowsky, who kept goal for West Germany in the 4-2 loss to England in the World Cup final, adding: "I think Dortmund can play a top role in international terms."

The "Latin feel" of the club was also significant. He added: "If you go to a match at the Westfalenstadion these days, the atmosphere is so hot that you can imagine yourself to be in southern Europe."

However Dortmund have lost their key striker from Switzerland Stéphane Chapuisat through injury for the rest of the season.

The 25-year-old face surgery after tearing knee ligaments training with Borussia Dortmund on March 16, just two days after scoring one goal and creating another in their 2-0 quarter-final, second leg win over Lazio.

Dortmund's Matthias Sammer pulled out of Germany's March 29 win over Georgia with an Achilles tendon injury. German coach Berti Vogts quashed rumours Sammer was really saving himself for European action.

"He's an extremely scrupulous and professional player," Vogts said. "He has tried to train, but he's really suffering."

Juventus, angry at the lack of spectators turning out to watch them, are to play the home-leg in Milan.

The Italian first division leaders are failing to pull-in the crowds to their Delle Alpi stadium. Only 20,000 turned out to watch them beat Eintracht Frankfurt in the quarter-finals in the stadium that holds 71,000.

By switching to AC Milan's San Siro stadium which holds 85,000, the club hopes that tens of thousands of their supporters in the Milan area will turn out to support them.

Meanwhile Bayer Leverkusen, the 1988 UEFA Cup winners, gave an interesting yardstick of title chances should they meet Dortmund in the final.

On March 18, Leverkusen handed out a 3-0 thrashing to the German league leaders — Dortmund's second loss in two weeks after being unbeaten for six months.

Meanwhile, Parma's Faustino Asprilla is available for selection after his suspension in the quarter-final, second leg against Denmark's Odense.

UEFA Cup semi-finals, first leg

Juventus, Italy v Borussia Dortmund, Germany
Bayer Leverkusen, Germany v Parma, Italy.

Magic miss Hardaway in 119-112 defeat to Lakers

SAN ANTONIO (R) — The Spurs are getting along without Dennis just fine, the Knicks won without Patrick, but the Magic missed Anfernee Hardaway — a 119-112 defeat, and clinched a playoff berth.

In San Antonio, Sean Elliott scored 30 points and David Robinson had 23 points and 14 rebounds as the streaking Spurs won their 11th straight game, overcoming a season-high 45 points from Charles Barkley to beat the Phoenix Suns 109-106.

The Spurs, who haven't lost since March 12, improved to 8-0 since rebounder par excellence Dennis Rodman went down with a separated shoulder.

"I think they thought they could beat us without Dennis Rodman but everyone picked it up and played on emotion," said Elliott. "But emotion is what you need in the playoffs so we'll let emotion carry us if we have to."

San Antonio, which has the best record in the NBA at 52-18, has won seven straight home games and is 25-2 at the Alamodome since December 12.

Phoenix lost for the fourth time in six games.

"We've got to figure out a way to stop Sean Elliott," said Barkley. "He made all the plays last time (a 105-100 San Antonio win) and he made them all today."

At New Jersey, John Starks scored 26 points and teamed with backcourt mate Hubert Davis to lead the New York Knicks to a 94-85 comeback victory over the Nets despite playing the second half without Patrick Ewing.

Ewing was ejected along with New Jersey's Rick Mahorn for a scuffle with 1:06 left in the first half.

New York outscored the Nets 25-11 in the fourth quarter. Davis finished with 17 points, 15 of them in the second half.

At Los Angeles, Eddie

Jones scored 11 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter as the Lakers handed the Orlando Magic — playing without star point guard Anfernee Hardaway — a 119-112 defeat, and clinched a playoff berth.

Cedric Ceballos had 33 points and Sedale Threatt contributed 19 for Los Angeles.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 27 points, pulled down 12 rebounds, and dished out six assists for Orlando (53-19) and Brooks Thompson had a career-best 20 points filling in for Hardaway.

Hardaway missed the game after feeling lightheaded during the shootaround and was taken to a hospital. Hardaway has been bothered by a sore throat and strep throat for the past two weeks and has lost 10 pounds (5 kg) over the last 10 days.

In Seattle, Shawn Kemp scored 13 of his 21 points in the first quarter and the SuperSonics cruised to their seventh straight win, 105-83 over the Atlanta Hawks.

Gary Payton added 21 points and added 21 points for the Sonics (51-20), who moved into first place in the Pacific Division, a half-game ahead of Phoenix.

The Hawks have dropped five of their last seven games. In Miami, Alonzo Mourning and Hersey Hawkins

led the Charlotte Hornets to a 105-92 victory over the Heat.

The loss was the fourth in five games for the Heat, who slipped 1 1/2 games behind Boston in the battle for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Glen Rice led Miami with 30 points.

In Boston, Sherman Douglas had 27 points and 10 assists as the Celtics held off a late rally to defeat the Dallas Mavericks 94-87.

Jamal Mashburn led Dallas with 30 points.

In Cleveland, Dikembe

NBA ROUNDUP

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scored 22 points apiece to Mutombo had a triple-double with 18 points, 18 rebounds and 10 blocks, and Jalen Rose's foul-line jumper with 50.8 seconds left lifted the Denver Nuggets to their third straight win, 104-101 over the Cavaliers.

Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf scored 32 points and Reggie Williams added 27 and 10 rebounds for Denver.

Mark Price, who missed two 3-point attempts in the last seconds, scored 21 for Cleveland, which is now tied with Chicago in the fifth playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Denver moved a half-game ahead of Sacramento into the eighth spot in the Western Conference.

RESULTS	
Detroit	110
New York	94
San Antonio	109
Indiana	104
Boston	94
Seattle	105
Charlotte	105
Denver	104
L.A. Lakers	119
Washington	105
New Jersey	85
Phoenix	106
Portland	93
Dallas	87
Atlanta	83
Miami	92
Cleveland	101
Orlando	112

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Nigerian Sunday Olofin (right) of Reggiana evades a tackle by Inter Milan's Dutch star match. Inter beat Reggiana 1-0 (AFP photo)

Martinez wins first title of '95

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (AP) — Conchita Martinez wrapped up her first title of the year in efficient and effective fashion, whipping Magdalena Maleeva 6-1, 6-1 on Sunday to win her second straight Family Circle Cup.

Martinez, who at times played ragged tennis, was rarely challenged by Maleeva, who lost each of her seven service games.

"I was a little bit surprised at the speed of the match," said Martinez, who won in 58 minutes. "I expected a bit of a tougher match."

Things haven't been tough for Martinez, No. 4 in the world, for most of the tournament. She lost only one set in five matches and took 36 of her final 41 games. Aside from her quarterfinals match with Iva Majoli, Martinez never was in danger of losing. Against Majoli, Martinez

trailed a set and 3-0 in the second before winning the next 12 games. A dominating 6-1, 6-2 victory over Natasha Zvereva in the semis came before the match with Maleeva.

"It was important that I came back from nearly losing," Martinez said. "That doesn't happen too often."

The first set against Maleeva took 24 minutes. Martinez's only blemish came during the third game when she made four straight errors and lost her serve at love.

Martinez dropped six points in the last four games, clinching the set when she came in behind a 160 mph (99 mph) serve for a forehand putaway.

Maleeva, who moved up to ninth in the world with her showing, changed tactics at the start of the second set, coming to the net more often to pressure Martinez. She broke the Spaniard's serve to tie it at 1-all and took the next game to seven duces

before succumbing. "I thought, 'now, I have a chance.' But she didn't give me many chances," said Maleeva, who has reached the finals in four of her past six tournaments.

Martinez regained control almost immediately, winning 12 straight points to go up 5-1. Three Maleeva errors, the last a long service return, finished the match.

"I was playing a little too passive and she took advantage," said Martinez, who finished with 36 unforced errors to Maleeva's 11.

The Spaniard, overshadowed by countrywoman and No. 1-ranked Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, has had to work through much since winning Wimbledon last July. Her only tournament win between then and here was at Stratton Mountain, Vermont, two weeks later. Critics have labelled her one-dimensional and called her a player who flounders at critical junctures.

WTA tennis rankings

1. Arantxa Sanchez (Spa):	299.44 Pts.
2. Steffi Graf (Ger):	298.82
3. Mary Pierce (Fra):	223.05
4. Conchita Martinez (Spa):	189.12
5. Jana Novotna (Cze):	174.97
6. Lindsay Davenport (USA):	147.92
7. Gabriela Sabatini (Arg):	137.57
8. Kimiko Date (Jpn):	128.07
9. Magdalena Maleeva (Bul):	115.17
10. Natalia Zvereva (Blr):	104.41
11. Anke Huber (Ger):	103.43
12. Mary-Joe Fernandez (USA):	94.70
13. Iva Majoli (Cro):	88.42
14. Naoko Sawamatsu (Jpn):	80.53
15. Brenda Schultz (Ned):	77.64
16. Amy Frazier (USA):	71.42
17. Lori McNeil (USA):	68.36
18. Julie Halard (Fra):	67.13
19. Amanda Coetzer (S. Africa):	62.02
20. Judith Wiesner (Aus):	61.64

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & YASMIN HUSSEIN
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DIFFERENT GAME, DIFFERENT STRATEGY

how you would play six no trump after the lead of the ten of clubs, ducked in dummy and by East. Note that, with no fit for partner or self-sustaining suit, South responded with a simple two diamonds despite holding more than half the points in the deck. When North could do no more than rebid

hearts, South launched into Blackwood and settled for the small slam in no trump. There are 12 tricks off the top if diamonds break 3-2, if hearts are 3-3 or the jack of hearts falls doubleton or, on the lead, if the long hearts and long diamonds are not held by the same defender. That makes declarer an overwhelming favorite to make the slam and, after the club lead, an overtrick is not out of the question.

The expert rubber bridge player has no difficulty with the hand. After cashing the king of hearts, declarer simply leads a low diamond from hand and ducks in dummy. Declarer wins the club return (as good as any), crosses to the ace of diamonds to cash the ace and queen of hearts, then returns to hand to run the diamonds. In all, declarer makes two spades, three hearts, five diamonds and two clubs—exactly the right number.

East-West vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH			
♠	10 5 2	♣	7
♥	A Q 10 6 4 3	♦	9 7 5
♣	4 3	♦	10 8 6
♠	10 9 8 7 5	♣	K 6 2
♥	A K 3	♦	K Q 7 5 4 2
♣	K Q 7 5 4 2	♦	A Q 3

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ Pass
3 ♣ 4 NT Pass
6 ♣ Pass 6 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♣.
We've written before about the differences between duplicate and rubber bridge. To test your skill at both these forms of the game, decide

TODAY	Cinema Tel.: 634144	Cinema Tel.: 699238	Cinema Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Tel.: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD	AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
	Tom Hanks in Forrest Gump Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15	Andy Garcia — Mee Ryan in When A Man Loves A Woman Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakhit & Andadileh Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 CONCORD '2' Jean-Claude Van Dam STREET FIGHTER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00	Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" in the political satire Hi Citizen written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaf daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Halfa Al Agha in the children's play ★ Sa'di's Return ★	Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays

Baseball is back in business

CHICAGO (AP) — Baseball players and owners ended their fight with a truce rather than a peace.

After 234 days, more than \$800 million in losses, no World Series and not even a settlement, the longest and costliest work stoppage in the history of professional sports finally ended Sunday night.

Owners accepted the union's offer to play without an agreement. The season, which had been scheduled to start Sunday night, will begin April 26 and each team will play 144 games, 18 fewer than the usual. Replacement players were sent packing.

"I don't regard it as a surrender," acting commissioner Bud Selig said following a 4½ hour owners meeting. "The players were on strike, they made an unconditional offer to come back, and we accepted that offer."

Players didn't make a no-strike pledge and owners didn't make a no-implementation agreement. The union could walk out again late this season if owners again threaten to impose a salary cap.

"Anyone who has gone through this eight-month experience will let it serve as a poignant reminder that we have a responsibility to make sure it will never happen again, certainly in our lifetime," Selig said.

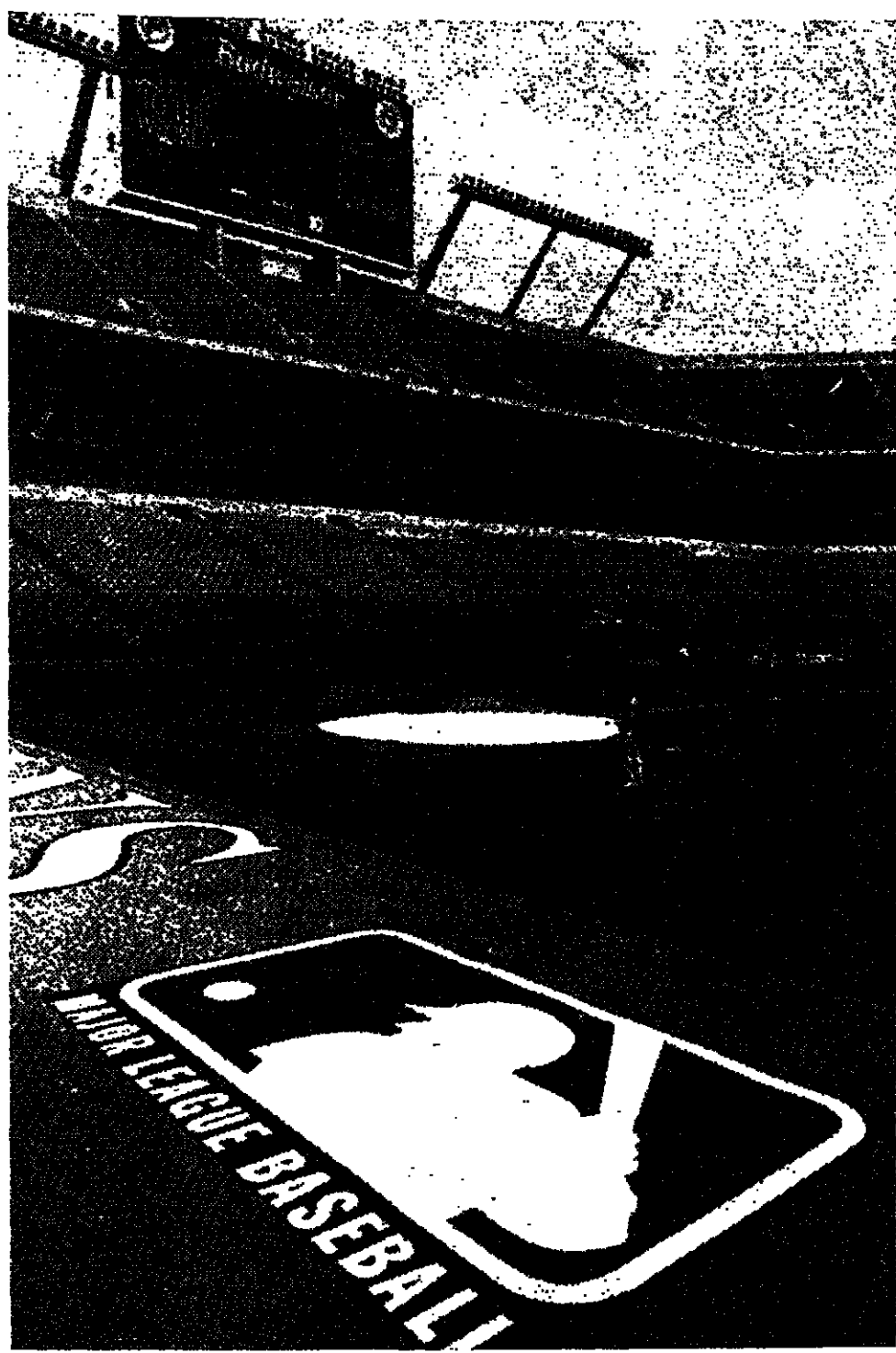
Far more difficult than getting players back on the field may be the job baseball faces of restoring the country's faith in the game.

Through it has faced seven previous work stoppages, this time baseball returns battered and berated by fans who grew weary of what President Clinton described as "just a few hundred folks trying to figure out how to divide nearly \$2 billion."

Players may report voluntarily starting Wednesday to training camps in Florida and Arizona, although some were expected to start trickling in Monday. The mandatory reporting date is Friday.

Until a week ago, there had been speculation owners might lock out players if the union ended the strike without a deal. But the pro-lockout faction, after determining it could not obtain the necessary 21 votes from among the 28 teams, did not even call for a vote.

The strike wiped out the final 52 days and 669 games



A groundskeeper waters the grass of an empty, postponed Major League baseball season's Joe Robbie Stadium, April 2, the venue for the opening game (AFP photo)

of the 1994 season and forced the cancellation of the World Series for the first time since 1904. It also wiped out the first 252 games of this season, raising the total of games lost to 921.

"I think it's a first step," union head Donald Fehr said. "Hopefully it's a big step in setting a better mood. One thing that could make me a lot more pleased, of course, is concluding a new long-term agreement."

The sides still must work toward a deal to replace the collective bargaining agreement that expired on Dec. 31, 1993. Players who walked out last Aug. 12 ended the strike Friday — the 232nd day — after U.S. District

Judge Sonia Sotomayor issued an injunction forcing owners to continue the work rules of the expired agreement.

Clinton, who failed two months ago in a personal effort to end the strike, said: "Today's decision is good news for the game of baseball, its fans and the local economies of the cities where baseball is played."

"While I am heartened to know this season will start with major league players, there are a number of underlying issues which still need to get resolved."

Baseball's eighth work stoppage since 1972 was caused by the owners' demand for a salary cap. Both

sides expected to finalize the back-to-work agreement on today. Exhibition games will begin on April 13, and teams may carry expanded rosters of 28 players — three more than the usual limit — through May 15.

All but forgotten in the rush to return were the replacement players. On Saturday, a day after Sotomayor's decision, management's labour lawyers told teams to release the replacements by the end of the day.

Oil Can Boyd, who hoped replacement ball would launch his comeback, was immediately released by the Chicago White Sox.

"I feel like I was used," the pitcher said.

Davis Cup

The big four 'play it again'

PARIS (AFP) — The 'big four' made it safely through to the semi-finals of the Davis Cup for the second year running this weekend — Germany and Russia recovering from first day doubts to slam the door on the Netherlands and South Africa, and the United States and Sweden completing overwhelming 5-0 victories over Austria and Italy.

The United States, who had already taken an unbeatable 3-0 lead after winning Saturday's doubles in Palermo, did not let up on Sunday although Andre Agassi, who has been suffering from mild lumbago, opted out of his dead rubber.

Jared Palmer was drafted in as a replacement and the doubles player completed an efficient 6-4, 6-3 win over Renzo Furlan with an ace.

Earlier world number-one Pete Sampras scored a 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 victory over Andrea Gaudenzi.

But with nothing to play for, the final day's matches were inevitably an anti-climax and the American players and their captain Tom Gullikson later called for a change in the rules to end the playing of 'dead rubbers.'

"Playing on Sunday was not Pete's favourite thing to do," admitted Gullikson after the match. "But we all knew the rules and he decided to play. Andre had a legitimate bad back."

"It is absurd to have dead rubbers," said Sampras after his win. "Rules are rules and I felt I should play but I just hope the rules are changed."

In the NRA finals and the World Series, fans pay for the whole series but sometimes there is not a seventh game. This is the only sport run like this.

Earlier American team doctor George Fareed treated world number-two Agassi for a bad back.

"I would have been worried if he had played today," said Fareed.

"He could have been injured. He is moderately immobile with lumbago caused by playing in the wet and heavy conditions on Friday when he beat Gaudenzi in straight-sets."

"Any other player would have defaulted — but Andre was determined to win."

Agassi later confirmed that he was travelling back to the

United States on Concorde, whereas Sampras said he plans to stay in Europe to adopt to the clay.

Sampras is due to play in Barcelona, the Monte Carlo Open and the Italian Open before making his sixth attempt to win the only major title he has never won at the French Open at Roland Garros.

Champions Sweden, who will travel to the United States for the September 22-24 show down for a place in the final, also chalked up a 5-0 win against frustrated Austria in Vaxjo — winning both of the final singles without dropping a set.

Former world number-one Stefan Edberg beat Thomas Muster 6-4, 6-2 while Magnus Larsson scored a 7-6, (7/4), 6-4 win over Gilbert Schaller.

It was the 47th-ranked Schaller's first match in the tie. He was unable to play on Friday after being taken ill with 'flu.'

Boris Becker, who crashed to a shock defeat against Paul Haarhuis in Utrecht on Friday, made no mistakes Sunday against Dutch number-one Richard Krajicek. The three times Wimbledon champion scored a 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1 win — his 35th win in 38 Davis Cup singles.

Compatriot Michael Stich completed the tie by defeating Haarhuis 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 in the final reduced singles for an overall 4-1 match scores.

Germany, the 1993 champions, now play Russia away in the second semi-final.

Last year's finalists, who had been level-pegging 1-1 after the first day's play against South Africa in Moscow and who won Saturday's doubles, also went through by a 4-1 scoreline.

Big-serving Yevgeny Kafelnikov delighted the Russian crowd by beating Wayne Ferreira 6-4, 7-5, 6-1. His win made the final singles a formality and Alexander Volkov romped to a 6-1, 6-1 win over Marcos Ondruska.

The United States and Germany will be looking to avenge their shock 1994 defeats in the next round.

Last year underdogs Russia scored a 4-1 win over Germany while Sweden beat favourites the United States 3-2.

Nigeria faces

disqualification

DOHA (AP) — The world football federation Monday threatened to disqualify Nigeria from the youth championship if the team failed to confirm its participation by the end of the day.

Nigeria is angered that the governing body moved the World Youth Championship here after health and security concerns related to the country's ability to stage the April 13-28 tournament for players under 20.

Over the weekend Nigeria tried but failed to organise an African boycott.

"If we have no confirmation by the end of today, we will bring Qatar into the competition instead of Nigeria," said Walter Gagg of the world federation, known as FIFA.

Nigeria attempted to persuade Burundi and Cameroon, Africa's other two qualifiers, to stay away at a weekend meeting of the African Football Confederation (CAF) in Cairo, Egypt.

Although the African Federation was "very disappointed" with the decision to move the tournament, they turned a thumb down on the boycott, Gagg said.

United's title hopes dashed by Leeds

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United's hopes of landing a third consecutive title suffered a huge setback at Old Trafford on Sunday when they were held to a goalless draw by a confident Leeds side.

Manager Alex Ferguson admitted before the game his side had to take full advantage of their four remaining home matches if they were to hold out any chance of overhauling Blackburn's six-point lead.

But United, badly missing the creative influence of banned Frenchman Eric Cantona, could not breakdown solid defence well-manned by Carlton Palmer and Andy Couzens.

Throughout the 90 minutes the capacity Old Trafford crowd chanted tributes to their French hero, who starts 120 hours of community service later this week after his two-week jail sentence for assaulting a spectator was quashed on Friday.

United stepped up the pressure after the interval and came close to scoring on a number of occasions but as the reigning champions threw themselves into attack, Leeds repeatedly hit them on the counter-attack and, with bet-

ter finishing, could well have claimed all three points.

United have picked up just five points from their last four games and Alex Ferguson's men, also without the suspended Steve Bruce and Les Sharpe, were lacking real inspiration.

On the stroke of half-time Leeds could have gone head when Peter Schmeichel failed to hold Rod Wallace's left-footer and Ferguson's side had two more escapes at the start of the second period.

opened up the clearest chance of the match.

In the day's other Premiership match, England discard Matthew Le Tissier scored his first Premiership goals for two months to help Southampton to a thrilling 4-3 win over Tottenham at the Dell.

Alan Ball's side climbed three places with this second successive win in a pulsating game of warring fortunes that went some way to erasing the memory of the 6-2

BRITISH SOCCER

First Deane guided a free header wide and then Schmeichel smashed a clearance at Palmer, the ball bouncing back over the Dane but then spinning into his hands as he scrambled towards the line.

At the other end, David Weatherall blocked a shot from Andy Cole, who then headed over from a Mark Hughes cross as United began to see their triple title dream dying.

Brian McClair dragged wide from 14 yards after Cole's blistering pace had

rount they received from Spurs in FA Cup fifth-round last month.

It was Le Tissier's 12th-minute corner which led to the opening goal, Neil Heaney heading in from close range.

England striker Teddy Sheringham capitalised on a Bruce Grobbelaar blunder four minutes later to score his 19th of the season before Jurgen Klinsmann gave Spurs the lead to take his season's tally to 25.



Soccer star charged with match-rigging: Singapore football star Abbas Saad (shown at right in above photo) was charged with plotting to fix matches on Monday. He was the fifth person hauled to court for soccer corruption in recent months. Abbas, a Lebanese-born Australian, pleaded not guilty and was released on bail of 100,000 dollars (\$66,667) until April 17. The 27-year-old was accused of plotting with a Czech professional Michael Vana, who has since fled to Prague, a bookie and others to fix matches in Malaysia's national league last year. Abbas allegedly agreed in March to help Vana rig matches after being told that he would be paid 15,000 dollars to 20,000 dollars per match. Four months later, Abbas allegedly asked Vana for 45,000 dollars, which the Czech had received from local bookie Rajendran Kurusamy, the court was told. The money was seized from Vana by the Corrupt Practice's Investigations Bureau, which arrested Abbas on Saturday. Vana fled in September while on bail awaiting trial for allegedly accepting 375,000 dollars to influence the outcome of matches. The court case involving Abbas, who faces a maximum jail term of six months, came a week after a former Singapore national Kunjuranman Kannan and the president of a local football club, Ong Kheng Hock, were found guilty of corruption. Singapore was recently criticised by Malaysia, where 150 footballers and coaches have been arrested for alleged match rigging, for not doing enough to stem soccer corruption. The criticism led to Singapore withdrawing earlier this year from the Kuala Lumpur-run league.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Sanchez faces 6 weeks out

HILTON HEAD, South Carolina (AFP) — World number one tennis star Arantxa Sanchez could face up to six weeks out through injury, the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) revealed here on Monday. Sports and medicine section director Kathleen Stroia said the Spaniard had suffered a stress fracture and a bad muscle sprain in her right ankle. Sanchez injured herself last Thursday here while playing against South African Amanda Coetzer. She went on to win the match to keep her world ranking but then abandoned the tournament. The injury could mean her missing the Federation Cup, beginning on April 17. Sanchez said: "It depends on how fast I recover, but at the moment I've only withdrawn from Amelia Island."

Romario goal causes furore

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Police stepped in to protect a linesman from protesting players after striker Romario scored a highly controversial goal in the Rio de Janeiro championship on Sunday. Romario received the ball in what appeared to be an offside position and then rounded the goalkeeper to put Flamengo 2-1 ahead in the 76th minute of their game against America. America players were incensed when linesman Guilherme Fernandes kept his flag down and immediately began pushing and jostling the official. The club coach and directors joined in the protests and police had to intervene to protect Fernandes. Meanwhile, dozens of journalists and other people ran on to the pitch, causing play to be held for 10 minutes while the field was cleared.

Cantona prepares for community service

MANCHESTER (R) — Manchester United's French striker Eric Cantona will this week meet probation officers to discuss his sentence of 120 hours of community service imposed for assaulting a spectator at a match. Appeal judge Ian Davies on Friday overturned a two-week jail sentence on Cantona for his "kung-fu" leap into the crowd at United's Premier League game against Crystal Palace on January 25 and instead ordered him to serve 120 hours community service. The judge said Cantona must use his dazzling talents to help others improve their skills, a prospect which set many young fans' pulses racing.

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Mubarak meets U.S. legislators

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, seeking continued U.S. aid in the face of a budget-cutting Congress, met with senators Monday as he began three days of meetings that will be capped with a call on President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Mubarak wants to keep American economic and military aid at the current \$2 billion yearly level. Despite congressional budget-cutting, he apparently stands a good chance as Egypt is widely viewed as a strong Arab voice for peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

Despite a 1979 peace treaty, though, Egypt's relations with Israel were chilled early in the year. Egypt threatened to try to block the spread of nuclear weapons unless Israel submitted to international inspection.

Mr. Mubarak backed off last month after talks in Cairo with secretary of state Warren Christopher. But during his visit, he is expected to request a formal structure for negotiations to establish a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

Israel has neither confirmed nor denied it has a nuclear arsenal. The Clinton administration is sympathetic to Israel's position and is confident it can get the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty extended in May even if a dozen Arab countries withhold their support.

Still, Mr. Christopher said in Cairo that adherence to the 25-year-old treaty should be universal.

Foreign Minister Amr Musa, indicating a willingness to compromise, said last month the aim is to establish a framework with Israel to discuss the issue.

Among members Congress calling on Mr. Mubarak at

Blair House, the presidential guest house across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House, were Senators Mitch McConnell, chairman of the Senate appropriations subcommittee on Foreign Operations, and Hank Brown and Diane Feinstein.

Back home, Mr. Mubarak's government is trying to suppress a surge of Muslim fundamentalism that threatens peace with Israel as well as his attempts to modernise his country.

Mr. Mubarak's talks here culminated Wednesday with President Bill Clinton, after talks with Secretary of State Mr. Christopher, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and Ron Brown and Deputy Defence Secretary John Deutch.

The talks "reaffirm the strength of our bilateral ties, the strength of our joint efforts towards the new Middle East that we both have worked so much to establish," said a U.S. official.

Officials stressed the common ground between the two sides ahead of the talks early Monday, but it would clear the NPT was to be one of the more difficult issues to handle.

Playing down the differences, a ranking U.S. official who spoke of the condition of anonymity insisted that Cairo and Washington agreed on the essential objectives of the NPT.

"We believe that a comprehensive peace in the region is the best step that can be taken towards that goal of fighting proliferation, of fighting forces of extremism," said the official.

"There is no crisis in U.S.-Egyptian relations," the official said. "They really rest on shared, mutual objectives of peace in the region, development, moderation and stability."

Egyptian medical union rejects training charges

CAIRO (AP) — A professional union dominated by the moderate Muslim Brotherhood denied Monday government accusations that it is training militants in Bosnia and Croatia and revealed that a fifth person had been detained in the case.

Only three of the five men were affiliated with the doctors' syndicate, which claims 120,000 members, said Hamdi Al Sayed, the union head. He denied the three were guilty of wrongdoing.

The arrests last week and Sunday were seen as a new strike by the government on the banned but tolerated Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood holds a majority in more than half of Egypt's 22 powerful professional syndicates, and has participated in parliamentary elections in coalition with other parties.

The crackdown is apparently aimed at discrediting the Brotherhood prior

to parliamentary elections later this year.

In January, the government arrested 28 Brotherhood members, accusing them of supporting Muslim insurgents in the south. The latest charges say the men were using the doctors' union as a front for organising trips by Brotherhood members to "terrorist" training camps in countries including Bosnia and Croatia.

The Brotherhood has denied the arrested men are members.

Mr. Sayed said the union's humanitarian relief committee was created 10 years ago and has been active inside Egypt and in Bosnia, Croatia, Somalia, Yemen and other countries.

"It offers humanitarian and medical relief inside and outside of Egypt, and it is not a military or political organisation," Mr. Sayed told a news conference.

Guerrillas attack militia in S. Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (Agencies) — Guerrillas Monday launched a rocket and gun attack on a position of the Israeli proxy militia the South Lebanon Army (SLA) in the "security zone" in southern Lebanon, an SLA official said.

Anti-tank rockets and automatic gunfire targeted the position at Al Thohra overlooking the village of Kfar Remman in the centre of the border zone occupied by Israel, but caused no casualties.

The militiamen fired back using tank shells "inflicting heavy losses," the SLA official said.

It was the first attack in southern Lebanon since a flare-up of violence on Friday in which a Hizbollah leader was killed in an Israeli helicopter attack in Lebanon, and an Israeli died in a rocket

barrage on northern Israel. An Israeli soldier was killed along with two guerrillas in clashes the same day in southern Lebanon.

Israel condemned Friday's Katyusha rocket attack on Galilee, which also wounded nine Israelis, as a violation of a tacit deal struck with Syria in 1993 after a massive Israeli operation to prevent further Hizbollah strikes on its northern territory.

A deputy for the group said in remarks published on Monday Hizbollah's weekend Katyusha rocket barrage on northern Israel forced the Jewish state to stop shelling civilians in South Lebanon.

Hizbollah Member of Parliament Mohammad Ra'ad said on Sunday night that the dozens of rockets fired by the militants which killed a 17-

year-old Israeli and wounded 12 proved effective in stopping Israeli aggressions.

"This weapon has proved and will prove its usefulness and will forever end the saying that the Zionists are superior in their battle against our nation," Mr. Ra'ad said in a statement quoting a speech he made at a festival in the town of Gha-zziyyeh.

Mr. Ra'ad said Hizbollah refrained from targeting northern Israeli settlements for the past five months but was forced to do so on Friday when Israeli gunners shelled civilian areas.

"The resistance was committed to a plan not to shell Israeli settlements but this only prompted the enemy to continue aggressions against villages and civilians in South Lebanon."

Iraq denies 'disappearance' of nuclear expert in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) — Iraq on Monday roundly rejected a weekend press report that one of its nuclear experts had disappeared while in Greece as Greek security officials said they were investigating the claims.

Iraq's ambassador to Athens, Issam Saud Khalil, said the report in the British Sunday Times newspaper of the disappearance of Khidir Abdul Abbas Hamza was "fabricated and ludicrous."

"There is no such thing. I categorically deny even the existence of the so-called news," he told a press conference.

The Sunday Times reported that Hamza was to work in an Iraqi nuclear energy centre and had disappeared on Feb. 27 in the Giyafa region, a southern suburb of the Greek capital, when he was trying to hand over secrets on Iraq's nuclear weapons programme.

Casting doubt on the story, Mr. Khalil suggested that "the best way to know (if it was true) is to question the Greek authorities whether they gave to such a person a visa or not."

Asked if he knew whether a person by the name of Hamza had ever worked for the Iraqi nuclear energy service, Mr. Khalil said he did not know.

The ambassador instead suggested the story had been concocted by Western security services to make it more difficult for the U.N. Security Council to lift its embargo on Iraq, imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

"From time to time, they give news that is to the detriment of the atmosphere of lifting the embargo," the ambassador said.

"Iraq has destroyed in accordance with the U.N. resolutions its nuclear sector," the ambassador, who was speaking in English, said, he called for a lifting of the U.N. embargo which he said was responsible for the "genocide" of the Iraqi people.

Police in Athens said Monday the Greek authorities had not been aware of the alleged affair until the Sunday Times article appeared, but that they EYP, Greece's secret services, had been investigating ever since.

Kuwaiti government pledges cooperation on human rights

KUWAIT (AP) — Interior Minister Sheikh Ali Al Sabah will form a team to work with parliament on human rights complaints from Kuwaitis and foreigners, the legislature's human rights committee said Monday.

Lawmakers praised the step as a sign of much-needed cooperation by the government, which rarely admits human rights abuses. But human rights help activists were sceptical about how much the ministry unit would help improve human rights in the emirate.

"The committee values this initiative taken by the minister," said Legislator Ahmad Al Nassar, rapporteur of the

50-member parliament's first committee on human rights.

Members of the ministry team will be named soon and will meet with deputies regularly to discuss complaints, mainly about deportations and abuses of Asian workers, officials said.

Hundreds of housemaids from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and India have taken refuge in their embassies claiming they were beaten, tortured or raped by their employers.

Many also complain that their employers do not pay them for months. A domestic help makes about \$130 a month.

Algerian opposition plans 2nd dialogue

PARIS (Agencies) — Algerian opposition groups are to meet soon in Europe in a second attempt to seek dialogue with the government to end three years of bloody civil strife, an exiled Algerian Islamist leader was quoted on Monday as saying.

Anwar Haddam, president of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) parliamentary delegation, said in an interview with the French daily Le Figaro that the talks would build on a meeting by the same groups in Rome in January.

"We'll meet again soon with the democrats in a European capital," he said, without specifying a date.

Algeria's military government turned down the proposal for dialogue on organising elections made by legal and banned opposition parties at the Rome meeting.

Mr. Haddam, who represents the FIS in Washington, said the next meeting would aim to show the world that Islamists and other opposition groups agreed on the way to end Algeria's crisis.

"We will launch a wide campaign of information so that all big powers know that all democrats and Islamists from a joint front to demand that the military return to the democratic process," he said.

Mr. Haddam, who last week attended an Arab and Islamist conference in Khartoum, said the FIS would again propose turning the country into an Islamic state.

The others will propose what they want and the people will choose, he said.

Mr. Haddam has said in other statements that the war between Muslim fundamentalists and Algeria's security forces would continue if the government refused dialogue. He has said planned presidential elections could not take place before opposition groups were brought into an interim administration.

Violence in Algeria has claimed an estimated 30,000 lives since the military stepped in to cancel January 1992 elections that the FIS was set to win.

In Khartoum, Haddam told AFP that the FIS insisted that any discussions be based on proposals already put to the army-backed government by his party and the secular opposition.

"We're still for a political settlement, in spite of the massacres, though we are becoming sceptical because of these atrocities," Mr. Haddam said, referring to the recent military campaign said in some reports to have claimed almost 3,000 lives.

Mr. Haddam was reacting to discussions President Liamine Zerroual has initiated with the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) and the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), led by Hocine Ait Ahmed.

Both parties were among eight signatories, including the FIS, to the so-called "national contract" — a platform for talks with the government — drawn up at the meeting in Rome in January.

"The Rome platform does not rule out talks with the authorities, but we expect these negotiations to be based on the Rome resolutions, which address the main principles of a political solution," Mr. Haddam said.

Algerian forces meanwhile attacked a militant convoy transporting arms, apparently smuggled from Libya and Sudan, through the desert. An Algerian newspaper said on Monday.

Israel rejects Russian appeal on nuclear treaty

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Monday rejected an appeal by Russia to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), saying Israel would do so only after achieving peace with all Arab states and Iran.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said during an hour-long meeting with Mr. Peres that Russia wanted to see a "universality" in which all nations signed the treaty banning the spread of nuclear weapons.

"That is why we are keen on Israel giving at least an indication for the future that it will sign," Mr. Kozyrev was quoted as telling Mr. Peres during an hour-long meeting.

According to foreign ministry spokesman Dany Shek, Mr. Peres replied that Israel was "interested in a nuclear free Middle East ... but this will only be relevant once there is peace with all Arab League members plus Iran."

"Once we shall have universal peace, I do not see any problem in having universality of the NPT," Mr. Peres told reporters.

Mr. Kozyrev told reporters he had made little headway in bringing Israel and Syria closer to peace during his visits this week to the region.

He said that while Israel, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)

were "very serious about the peace process, they still face considerable difficulties."

Mr. Kozyrev's three-day stay in Israel has been surrounded by reports of last-minute cancellations of appointments with officials.

Mr. Kozyrev said anything he did not show up for "was never scheduled, never agreed upon." He said he never intended to meet with city officials because that was the job of the mayors of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The Jewish state is fiercely opposed to Russia's proposed sale of nuclear reactors to Iran, which it charges could help Tehran develop nuclear weapons.

Israel refuses to comment on foreign reports that it has 200 nuclear warheads.

The United States is calling for an indefinite extension of the treaty when it comes up for renewal at a U.N. conference on April 17, but Egypt is leading an Arab campaign to force Israel to sign up.

Mr. Kozyrev and Mr. Peres meanwhile agreed to abolish diplomatic visas to make travel by their envoys easier, the foreign ministry said.

The Russian minister headed back to Moscow at the end of his Middle East tour, which included talks in Cairo, Damascus, Beirut and with PLO leader Yasser Arafat in Gaza.

Sudan meeting falls short on action

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — An Islamic conference in the Sudanese capital has failed to take effective action because it was too loose a grouping of contradictory trends, delegates said Monday.

The conference gathered too many contradictory currents, Islamists and Arab nationalists — who detest each other — radicals and moderate, "one delegate said, asking not to be named.

"There is no joint programme and therefore no common ground for action," he told AFP.

The three-day conference, which ended Sunday, served "for us to meet and inform each other about the plight of Muslims in other countries," Lebanese pro-Iranian Hizbollah official Hassan Ezze-dine said.

The forum, attended by 300 participants from 80 countries and portrayed in the West as a meeting of Islamic hardliners, was the scene of radical speeches but the final resolutions were relatively moderate.

Delegates charged in private that Sudan's Muslim fundamentalist strong man Hassan Tourabi was using the conference, the third of its kind in Sudan since 1991, to portray himself as a pan-Islamic leader.

The conference's secretary general tried in vain to overcome the rifts between Shiites and Sunnis, and between fundamentalists and the governments they are fighting, they said.

This was reflected in the way the resolutions were announced, with a draft prepared by Dr. Tourabi falling far short of the tenor of the speeches hammered home on the rostrum, observers noted.

Dr. Tourabi's text rejected peace and normalisation with Israel but made no mention of armed struggle against the Jewish state, as demanded by Palestinian groups such as the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

The armed struggle and rejection of the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy deal were added in the final statement only after strong protests.

Dr. Tourabi still managed to distance the conference from the fundamentalist movements involved in armed struggle. The statement called for mediation between militants and Algiers, between Moscow and rebel Muslims in Chechnya.

The need to set up an Islamic-Christian dialogue was also stressed.

"Some people think the dangers facing the world were all gathered in Khartoum. The participants did not meet to terrorise the world but to reinforce Islam," Dr. Tourabi said at the end of the forum.

He declared that "Islam will win," to the cheers of hundreds of Sudanese including militiamen and women armed with assault rifles.

Some diplomats following the meeting said they were interested to know what links might be forged between militant wing cam-

paigns of violence across the Arab and Islamic world that in the final resolution.

"Like all the conferences throughout the world, their activities are not confined to the conference. Most of the business takes place on the sidelines," Dr. Tourabi told reporters late on Sunday.

Delegates included figures from Hizbollah, Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Algerian Islamists from Al Nahda and the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) as well as Egypt's fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood.

"We are worried about what sort of meetings might have been going on in the sidelines," one western diplomat said.

Also wandering the corridors of Khartoum's Friendship Hall, on the banks of the Blue Nile, were senior representatives from the breakaway Russian republic of Chechnya, Bosnia, and Muslim groups from Africa, North America, Europe and Asia.

In the final resolution issued on Sunday, the conference rejected the accord for Palestinian self-rule, supported an armed struggle against Israel, called for the lifting of U.N. sanctions against Iraq and Libya, and urged Muslim countries to implement Sharia (Islamic law).

Most demands seemed mild compared to some vitriolic speeches condemning the West during the conference.

"Anyone who attended the conference carefully, anyone who read the text from the conference will see that it is what sometimes people over there (in the west) call 'moderate'," Dr. Tourabi said.

The conference, first held in 1991 in the aftermath of the Gulf war, also gave Sudan a chance to reach out to a global Muslim audience at a time when it faces growing international isolation over Western and Arab charges of sponsoring "terrorism."

"It's hard to see what they have achieved at this meeting apart from giving all these groups the chance to meet up, and to offer Sudan a platform on the international Islamic stage," one Western diplomat attending the final session said.

Most delegates were coy about the aims of their meetings on the sidelines of the Khartoum conference.

But for some, like U.S. group Nation of Islam, the meeting offered a chance to bridge the cultural, linguistic and geographical divide separating them from fellow Muslims.

When he met Sheikh Naim Qassem of Hizbollah after a news conference in a Khartoum hotel, Nation of Islam representative Akbar Muhammad found an interpreter to pass on his good wishes.

"Tell the sheikh we are the Hizbollah of America," a grinning Mohammad, wearing jeans and trainers, asked the translator to tell a bemused Qassem in his flowing blue robes.

Princess Grace's Irish cottage may become shrine

LONDON (AFP) — A family of the late Prince Grace of Monaco — the 19th-century American actress Grace Kelly — may donate a modest ancestral home in western Ireland to groups who want to turn it into a shrine to her memory.

The secluded two-room cottage in the village of Drin-la, County Mayo, belongs to Princess Grace's grandfather, John Bernard Kelly, who eked out a living in the land before emigrating to America in the 1800s.

Princess Grace visited the house with her husband, Prince Rainier, and daughter Caroline, in 1961. Fifteen years later, six years before her death in a car crash, she bought it for about \$8.0 (\$12,000) intending, according to local residents, to turn it into a holiday home.

Today the cottage, on the shores of Lake Drumongue, bears witness to the ravages of time and weather. Unoccupied for more than 20 years, its thatched roof is gone, and its floors are carpeted in moss. But the stone hearth at chimney still stands tall, and least some of the rough-hewn oaken beams are sound.

The Daily Telegraph said local writer to Prince Rainier wrote to Prince Rainier years ago asking that the property be donated for memorial to the princess.

They received a reply early last year saying he would give "serious consideration" to the donation of the cottage "to sympathetic development proposal," Teresa Geraghty, secretary to the local parish priest, said the letter asked for a detailed proposal and financial statement.

Geraghty, who met the princess during her last visit to the town in 1979, has fond memories of her. "I played the accordion for her in her hotel after dinner," she told the Telegraph. "I remember her smiling and joining in some of the songs. She had her hair done in the local hairdressers and went to mass in the parish church. She is held in very high esteem here," said Geraghty.

Doctors' group adopts ban on surrogate moms

FLORENCE, Italy (AP) — With parliament so far unable to come up with a law an association of Italian doctors adopted guidelines of artificial fertilisation, including a ban on surrogate mothers. The National Council of the Federation of Italian Doctors, Surgeons and Obstetricians also decided a meeting here to ban artificial fertilisation after the death of either the potential mother or father. A Roman medical board has been studying the case of a 30-year-old woman who earlier this year announced the birth of a baby whose genetic mother had died in a car crash. The doctor used an egg of the mother's which had been frozen as part of an earlier unsuccessful in vitro fertilisation attempt and the sperm the woman's husband. The resulting embryo was implanted in the husband's sister, who carried out pregnancy. After a polio, the board took up the case to see if sanctions were warranted. A decision pending. The National Federation has about 300 members. Its guidelines include a ban on artificial fertilisation for homosexual couples, and a stop to impregnation of women of 30 who are in menopause.

Mafia leave goat's head on prosecutor's doorstep

PALESTINE (R) — The Sicilian mafia, in a classic act of intimidation, left a severed goat's head and a cross on the doorstep of a top anti-mafia prosecutor Sunday, police said. Prosecutor Ernesto Amelio, brother of accidant filmmaker Gianni Amelio, found the package Sunday when he opened the door to his heavily-guarded flat in Sicilian capital Palermo. Police said they were looking into why none of the sold who provide round-the-clock surveillance of Amelio's building reported any suspicious movements.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Launch of Israeli satellite being delayed

TEL AVIV (AP) — The failed launch of an Israeli communications satellite from Russia has stalled plans by Israel to send its own spy satellite into orbit, a newspaper said Monday. Israel apparently wants to avoid back-to-back failure which could reflect badly on Israel's space programme. The Haaretz daily said no target date has been set for the launch of the spy satellite, Ofek 3, even though already three months ago media reports said launch preparations were being made. Technical complications and proximity to last week's failed launch of the Gurwin-1 communications satellite have delayed the Ofek launch, Haaretz said. The Gurwin-1 was built by Russian immigrants and Israeli scientists at Israel's Technion institute. The March 28 launch from a site 900 kilometres north of Moscow failed because of a malfunction of the booster rocket.

Lebanese paper fined for 'sectarianism'

BEIRUT (R) — A Lebanese court on Monday fined editors of a Christian opposition newspaper \$5,300 for running an article in 1993 that "evokes sectarian strife" in Lebanon. The publications court ruled that Nida'a Al Watan daily's story accusing Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri, a Sunni Muslim billionaire, of working to Islamise Lebanon by purchasing land from Christians provokes sectarian feuds. The newspaper's responsible director and editor-in-chief at the time and two editing directors were fined a total of \$5.5 million Lebanese pound (\$5,200) for the April 25, 1993, story. Lebanese law allows the editors and the prosecutor-general to appeal the sentence within in days from the ruling.

Egypt bans monkeys in anti-AIDS drive

CAIRO (AFP) — The authorities at Cairo airport have banned passengers from bringing monkeys into Egypt as part of an anti-AIDS campaign, the daily Al-Ahram newspaper said Monday. The new restrictions, which also cover animals accompanying transit passengers, were introduced after the authorities destroyed two AIDS-infected pet monkeys on a flight from New York on March 29.

Egypt to hold inventory of treasures

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is to hold the first inventory of its ancient treasures for 50 years after the discovery of a smuggling gang stealing important antiquities, Culture Minister Farouq Hosni said Monday. The inquiry which is expected to take three months to complete, follows the discovery of a gang smuggling antiquities to Britain and several other attempts to spirit treasures out of the country in the last two months, officials said. Mr. Hosni, cited by Egyptian newspapers on Monday, said: "A committee of experts has been set up to conduct an inventory of archaeological pieces held in the 114 stores in Egypt to determine the number of antiquities stolen and the responsibility of negligent officials who have allowed such thefts." Four Egyptians, including a former official responsible for ancient treasures in the Saqqara region, 12 kilometres south of Cairo, face charges after thieves taking goods in Britain were discovered. Last month Abdul Halim Nureddin, secretary general of the country's antiquities authority, told AFP that Egypt was planning to toughen penalties for smuggling by making those found guilty serve a life sentence of forced labour.

Kidnapped Italians safe and sound

ROME (AFP) — Nine Italian tourists kidnapped on the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia are in good health and being held in Ethiopia's Lake Assale region, an Italian foreign ministry spokesman said Monday. Contact had been made by elders of the Afar tribes in the area, who were able to see the tourists abducted two weeks ago and talk to the kidnappers, he added. "The nine tourists are on Ethiopian territory, in the region between Lakes Assale and Adfera," not far from the Eritrean border, he said, adding that they had been seen together and appeared to be well. Ethiopian authorities organised the meeting with help from Afar elders living on both sides of the border. The spokesman said the kidnappers had not made any precise demands in exchange for the release of the tourists, but for stating that they wanted mediators of a "higher level" than they had met. Italy's ambassador to Italy, Maurizio Melani, last week said the tourists were kidnapped on March 24 or 25 as they were travelling in a caravan from the Eritrean town of Badda, some 10 kilometres from the border to Lake Assale, across the Dankil desert.